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This week

21 January

'I freely admit that the best of my fun, I owe it to horse and hound'

Whyte-Melville 1821-1878



Page 36: a cheerful Chris Easton after landing in a Berkeley hedge



Page 40: Georgia Stokes' SOS Talented Mr Ripley is praised for his wins at Addington



Page 70: Piggy French invites us into her impressive tack room



Page 62: steam rises from one runner during a chilly day's racing at Warwick

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Cover picture by Jon Stroud Media
Olympia winner Townend Schubert (feature, p28)



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'We work on cross-training to create and develop impulsion, suppleness and agility; this helps the horse to become a body mover, not just a leg mover'

Paul Fielder p49

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Is the Olympic legacy fizzling out?

With the London GCT at risk, is showjumping disappearing from the capital? Pippa Cuckson reports



London could be lost from the Global Champions Tour calendar in favour of a new show in Mexico

AFTER Greenwich Park hosted more than 200,000 equestrian fans during London 2012, promoters vied to launch outdoor internationals – feeding the public's apparent new appetite to watch horse sport in the capital.

But with news that the Global Champions Tour (GCT) is launching in Mexico (news, 14 January) and is now undecided whether Syon Park (pictured above), London or Paris will receive its sole remaining date for 2016, is the "soft" Olympic legacy finally fizzling out?

Even Olympia and Royal Windsor supremo Simon Brooks-Ward would not again attempt an outdoor launch in central London, after his proposal for Horse Guards Parade in 2013 was blocked by Royal Parks.

"I think the moment has gone, unfortunately," he told *H&H*. "I don't think Horse Guards would have another equestrian event."

GCT brought its trademark glitz to London, and notably attracted the BBC.

But the difficulties for organisers without the financial and political clout of the London Olympic organising committee are underlined by GCT London's four changes of site in just three years.

Clapham Common, which hosted showjumping in the 1980s, Greenwich and

Syon Park were among many venues assessed for GCT by MJ2 Events LLP in June 2012.

Stabling is often the problem at "landmark" sites. MJ2 concluded the only central locations capable of profitability were Horse Guards Parade, a site south of Kensington Palace, and playing fields at Hyde Park Barracks.

Two London five-stars then appeared in the 2013 FEI calendar – a GCT at Kensington Palace Gardens in June, organised by Peter Phillips' company SEL (UK), and Mr Brooks-Ward's Horse Guards proposal in July.

The British Equestrian Federation hoped both could proceed but Royal Parks, which controls many of London's iconic sites, chose the GCT, despite anticipated issues with planning permission.

When planning was refused in March 2013, Mr Phillips found a replacement, on parking space at Stratford, with the Olympic stadium a distant view.

Mr Phillips also landed live coverage on the BBC. The inaugural London GCT was a success, with Ben Maher and Cella trumping fellow London gold medallists Nick Skelton and Big Star in a sizzling jump-off, but it drew

only a few thousand spectators.

In 2014, the GCT moved to Horse Guards, again with low spectator numbers. By 2015, the GCT and Mr Phillips had parted company, for reasons both declined to divulge. The GCT also lost BBC coverage and moved to Syon Park, 10 miles from Westminster.

This week, Syon Park told *H&H* it was keen to host GCT again, despite the 2015 show being stricken by wet weather and spectator complaints about expensive tickets – there is free public admission at many GCT shows in Europe. However, footfall is not a key component of the usual GCT business model, which involves five-figure rider pay-cards and hospitality packages on a scale the GCT may have struggled to sell in Britain.

Trans-Atlantic expansion

THE GCT's preference for Mexico City over London is also linked to the Tour's long-planned trans-Atlantic expansion. This builds on the Americas' investment in showjumping in the run-up to Rio, and investment in the Tour itself by US property tycoon Frank McCourt. Mexico sends a full team to Rio, and the country qualified for the 2015 Nations Cup final.

A Royal Parks spokesman told *H&H* the GCT arrangement with Horse Guards was only ever for one year, and added: "We are currently at capacity for leading events in all parks for 2016, but we are always open to receiving applications in line with our major events strategy."

Is a return to Greenwich feasible? An independent organiser seems unlikely to afford a platform or other essential ground-level measures, as were used in 2012.

Any proposal could also prod the revival of local protest group NOGOE (No to Greenwich for Olympic Equestrian Events).

Former campaigner John Bell said: "We know from experience how much damage even the 'small scale' test events caused. There has been a lot of building in the area since 2012 and the Park is now needed as a recreation site for Londoners and tourists."

"I don't think Horse Guards would have another equestrian event"

Simon Brooks-Ward



Clearwater will be competed by Japan

Olympics 2016

Horses move ahead of Rio

After the curtain closed on 'transfer deadline' day last week (15 January), names of horses with new riders are emerging

JAPAN has led the charge when it comes to purchasing dressage horses for Rio. Since clinching Olympic team qualification at Perl CDI in Germany last September, the nation has been investing heavily in its equine armoury.

Olympic dressage horse Clearwater, who has recently been competed by Britain's Lottie Fry, has been sold to the country.

The 18-year-old grand prix horse twice represented Denmark at the Olympics with Anne Van Olst and recently won two under-25 grand prix classes with Lottie.

The Danish warmblood gelding was bought from Ton Kies by Tsunehiro Shimoda for his 39-year-old son, Akihiro, to ride.

"He is very special – I said goodbye to him with tears in my eyes," Anne told *H&H*.

"Akihiro rode him very well and the nice thing for me is that I know the Shimoda family well as I also sold them my Barcelona Olympic horse, Chevalier, 20 years ago."

Joining Clearwater in the Japanese camp is Dutch rider Imke Schellekens-Bartels' number one horse, Toots, who has been sold to Akane Kuroki (*Dressage Life*, 7 January).

Another schoolmaster to change hands is German rider Christoph Koschel's grand prix ride, Tiesto. The gelding has been leased to

the reigning Japanese national grand prix champion, Kiichi Harada.

Meanwhile Bertoli W, owned by Wolfram Wittig, has been sold to Kuranoko Saito. The 14-year-old by Breitling W will be ridden by Kuranoko, who trains with Wolfram.

Japan did not field a dressage team in London 2012, but individual rider Hiroshi Hoketsu made headlines when, at the age of 71, he was Games' oldest competitor.

Hiroshi has now bought the Wittig family's 15-year-old Westfalian Brioni W.

- Valentina Truppa's Eremo Del Castegno, who finished 15th individually at London 2012, has been sold to Brazil and will be campaigned by Jorge Ferreira Da Rocha.

- Australia's Nicholas Fyfe has taken on the ride on Lumberjack, a 12-year-old previously ridden by Susan Dutta of the USA.

- Jose Antonio Garcia Mena of Spain will be aiming 15-year-old gelding El Santo for Rio.

- Canadian Chris von Martels has leased Tinne Vilhelmson Silfvén's Divertimento.

Showjumping

FRENCH rider Roger Yves Bost's Quartz De La Lande has been sold to Euro Stables for Brazilian Yuri Mansur to ride.

- Ukrainian Oleksandr Onyshchenko has purchased Carlos Lopez's Prince De La Mare. Meanwhile Columbia's Carlos has bought Italian rider Emanuele Gaudiano's Olympia World Cup winner Admara 2.

- According to the FEI, Ben Maher is now the co-owner of his top ride, Diva II, along with Russian Tatiana Korsakova. Ben's name was added to the database in November 2015, although he told *H&H* that the ownership arrangement had "not changed".

Eventing

JULIE RICHARDS (née Black) has secured 2012 Adelaide CCI4* winner Sandhills Brillaire after the mare was bought by Equine Olympic Investments. She won the four-star with Craig Barrett.

HORSE & HOUND HORSES IN THE NEWS



KILCANNON CRUNCH

Lauren Shannon has paid tribute to her promising three-star eventer that was put down aged 10 (9 November). "Crunch" was being treated for sinusitis and, due to complications, developed meningitis.



PACHA DU POLDER

The nine-year-old, owned by the Stewart Family and trained by Chloe Roddick, will be ridden in future point-to-points and potentially the Foxhunter Chase at the Cheltenham Festival by Olympic cyclist Victoria Pendleton.



MILL CREEK RAPHAEL

Top Canadian showjumper Eric Lamaze's former grand prix winner has died aged 25. The gelding jumped at the 2002 World Equestrian Games and twice won the Canadian Showjumping Championship.



SHELFORD RUPERT

Emma Gibson's prolific winning show hunter has died aged 24. Rupert won the first Search For A Star final in 1996, ridden by Stuart Buntine. He went on to clock up more than 230 wins in weights, ladies, amateurs and workers.



BUCKLE UP

The 10-year-old who previously showjumped with Norway's Ole Kristoffer Meland, is to be ridden by Shane Sweetnam. The Irish rider has also taken on Cobolt, who was formerly with Sweden's Niklas Arvidsson.

Plight of 'invisible' horses highlighted

WORLD Horse Welfare aims to "shine a spotlight" on the world's "invisible horses" in a new campaign launched today (21 January), writes Amy Mathieson.

In the first part of the campaign "Bring invisible horses into focus", World Horse Welfare is calling for the public to be vigilant for dumped or abandoned foals.

The first quarter of the year typically brings a rise in the numbers of foals and youngsters abandoned and left to fend for themselves. The welfare organisation is urging people to report them to enable charities to intervene.

"The winter months can be a difficult time of year for any horse, with harsh weather conditions, sparse grazing and a lack of shelter available from trees and hedgerows – but combine this with a young age and it's clear why so many abandoned youngsters are found in a terrible condition," said Tony Tyler of the charity.

"Welfare charities are on hand to address concerns, but we need the public to keep their eyes open for foals, youngsters or adult horses in trouble and report it to us with as much information as possible.

"If you spot a horse and you are concerned, there are a number of things to note down so that you can give the relevant



details when making a call.

"You will need to have seen the horses personally and be able to provide details of the problems, a full description of the horse and location information. If you are able to take photos or a video without endangering yourself or the horse this is also helpful."

The year-long campaign will highlight the plight of horses throughout the world, from those left in barns and stables for weeks on

end, to those working many hours every day on the streets of cities such as Choluteca in Honduras or Cape Town in South Africa who go unnoticed by governments, to the horses transported long distances across borders.

The charity will be focusing on a number of key themes as the year progresses, including: foals and youngsters, rescue and rehoming, working horses around the world, and campaigning to improve laws to protect horses.

● **If you are concerned about a horse, call World Horse Welfare's welfare line on 08000 480 180.**



Frodo was found dumped as a foal in December 2014 (above) and has now made a full recovery (above, left)



Seven Percent was named *H&H* outstanding mare of the year

THE broodmare Seven Percent was the recipient of the *H&H* outstanding mare award at this year's British Horse Foundation's

Breeding

Award for Seven Percent

breeders' awards dinner (16 January), writes Alice Collins.

Suzy Mainprice's 21-year-old performance-tested Hannoverian dressage mare by Sherlock Holmes x Western Star was imported as a yearling and has produced 14 foals.

"I bought her in Germany with her dam for very little money," Suzy, of Morgan Equine, told *H&H*. "I was flabbergasted she won, particularly as people are importing mares costing £100,000 and we've only ever used our own stallions on her, not top ones from Europe."

After having her first foal, Seven Percent was left empty in order to complete her performance test.

"Everyone who's had one from her is always after another. They're so beautifully balanced and trainable," said Suzy.

Suzy described the award as "a great boost at this cold time of year".

Seven Percent had half a dozen foals by Pascal, including the filly Private Eye. She in turn was matched with Donnersohn to produce Double Agent, now an international para dressage

horse with Canada's Bert Sheffield.

In 2015, Seven Percent had three progeny and one granddaughter qualified for the British Dressage winter championships at Hartpury: Pik Panther, Unsolved, Ultimate and Double Agent.

Also honoured was the late Richard Matson, who was awarded the SEIB meritoire for outstanding contribution to British breeding.

Richard died last month and his award was collected by his sons Tullis and Edward.



Crank nosebands have been questioned, but the FEI has no plans to ban their use in competition

Welfare

Tack criticism extends to crank nosebands

Tight nosebands have come under fire. Rachael Hook reports

THE use of crank nosebands has been brought into question by riders and industry officials, but the FEI has no plans to ban their use.

David Hunt, president of the British International Trainers' Foundation, said he was "dead against" the nosebands at World Horse Welfare's annual conference (10 November, 2015).

Crank nosebands feature a levered fastening where the leather passes back on itself through two rings, enabling the noseband to be fastened more tightly than with a plain cavesson.

"I completely disagree with them," David told *H&H* following the conference.

"I don't believe you need to crank a horse's jaw up. If you need to, there's something wrong with the acceptance of the contact.

"It doesn't solve the problem, it hides it away and the horse becomes quietly resentful."

David believes an overly tight crank noseband gives a "superficial" self-carriage.

"If you shut the horse's mouth up it will be very light in the hand but it's a false lightness," he said.

"Certainly in my riding career I've never found it necessary."

Dressage trainer and rider Heather Moffett echoed Paul's concerns.

"A dressage horse needs to be able to relax its jaw," she said.

"The reason for having the crank is so you can pull the noseband really tight – it's inhumane.

"I think there needs to be something done to monitor the tightness of nosebands.

"I would like to see the crank noseband banned, or, more realistically, the two-finger

rule observed [that two fingers can fit under the fastened noseband for optimal comfort]."

Even pressure

HOWEVER, international dressage rider Rebecca Hughes spoke in favour of the crank noseband.

"I like them to create an even pressure around the noseband," she told *H&H*.

"I believe some people do use them too tightly. It should be even and comfortable for the horse.

"I also think they can be too loose and people can fit their hand through. They should be snug but not extremely tight."

An FEI spokesman said its stewards adhere to the FEI stewarding manual and code of conduct for the welfare of the horse in respect of any action or device that could cause harm or discomfort to a horse.

"The FEI rules very clearly state that a noseband should never be so tightly fitted as to harm a horse," he said.

"Any bit or other item of saddlery likely to wound a horse is forbidden, and the FEI stewards, who have in-depth knowledge of the sport, check the saddlery of each horse to ensure that this rule is adhered to.

Stewards are briefed to check nosebands as well as bits during this process."

He added that nosebands are regularly discussed by the FEI dressage committee.

"We are currently not planning to ban specific nosebands, but we do constantly listen to our equestrian community via our national federations, our athlete representatives on our discipline committees, riders' and trainers' clubs and at key events such as our annual FEI Sports Forum [in April]," he said.

RICHARD JOHNSON

The *H&H* racing columnist has secured 3,000 wins under National Hunt Rules. His 3,000th victory was aboard *Garde La Victoire* on 12 January. He is only the second jockey after AP McCoy to reach that number.



HANS PETER MINDERHOUD

The Dutch dressage rider, who was on the 2015 Europeans winning team, has taken the ride on *Dream Boy*. The eight-year-old KWPN licensed stallion by *Vivaldi* was previously trained and competed by *Gerdine Maree*.



CHARLOTTE DUJARDIN

The double Olympic gold medal-winner has raised more than £7,000 for equine charity *The Brooke*. The global ambassador for the charity donated items from her competition career to be sold in an auction.



SAM ECROYD

The British event rider has featured on ITV's dating show *Take Me Out*. The 18-year-old was shown on 9 January show, hosted by Paddy McGuinness, and the rider headed to the "Isle of Fernando's" for his date with lucky lady Joanna.



CARL HESTER

The dressage star has raised more than £2,000 for *Beating Bowel Cancer* by taking part in the "Decembeard" campaign. He told *H&H* he was "delighted" with the amount raised by growing a beard.





Show listings

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To have your show included in our 2016 directory free of charge, please send the date of your event, venue name, town, county, secretary's telephone number and details of the disciplines running – stating whether they are affiliated or not – to: Madeleine Pitt, *Horse & Hound*, 8th floor, Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London, SE1 0SU, or by email to hhshowlistings@timeinc.com.

All show listings must be received by midnight on Sunday 31 January.

Racing

Whip bans on the decline

WHIP offences decreased by 9% in 2015, compared with 2014, according to data from the British Horseracing Authority (BHA).

Despite uproar following high-profile bans (news, 14 January) new figures suggest that 0.61% of rides are now incurring a penalty. When compared to 2010, the last full year before the revised whip Rules were introduced, this is a decrease of 48% in the number of offences, despite the thresholds for use having been in effect halved.

However, the number of winning rides incurring a suspension in Group or Grade One contests increased from five to 10 of the 72 races run in 2015.

"Prior to the review the number of offences was rising at an unacceptable rate. Under the new Rules the number of offences has nearly halved. Bearing in mind that the thresholds for use were also effectively halved, this equates to a substantial, positive change to the manner in which the whip is being used in Britain," said Jamie Stier of the BHA.

Endurance

Another death in the UAE

In a surprising move, the FEI is urging UAE organisers to adopt local welfare rules after a further equine fatality. **Pippa Cuckson** reports

THE FEI is urging UAE ride organisers to adopt local welfare rules successfully applied at the Bou Thib venue in a bid to reduce the very high speeds recorded by competitors still evident in the region's endurance rides this winter season.

The extraordinary move, which suggests the FEI's own tighter measures have proved ineffective, follows the death of another horse at the Al Reef Cup on Saturday (16 January), five days short of the anniversary of the Splitters Creek Bundy fatality at the same venue.

Idaho Rabba ran into a perimeter fence and broke a leg, having earlier been filmed apparently out of control on the first loop with rider Abdul Aziz Salah Abdulla Ameen and with a TV camera crew in hot pursuit (pictured, right). Clips of the video provoked horror on social media.

Wollumbin Shahim, the horse upsides him throughout, recorded a first loop speed of 27kph. A final loop speed of more than 34kph was recorded by the overall fifth-placed horse.

Idaho Rabba is the sixth officially notified fatality this season. The previous five were all at UAE national rides, which are now staged under FEI rules as one of the many conditions attached to the lifting of UAE suspension for major horse welfare violations, enforced last March.

HH Sheikh Sultan Al Nahyan, a senior member of Abu Dhabi's ruling family, despaired of the lack of progress and introduced his own horse welfare rules at Bou Thib, including a maximum speed of 20kph and revised parameters for vettings.

Bou Thib is adhering to FEI rules but only giving the valuable prizes to combinations meetings Sheikh Sultan's "top condition challenge".

Bou Thib has seen completion rates of 70% in three fixtures so far, compared to about 25% elsewhere, and no reported fractures or serious metabolic issues.

Speed still a factor

FEI endurance director Manuel Bandeira de Mello said: "It is abundantly clear that speed is a major factor in these incidents and that it is necessary to introduce measures to slow down the horses in order to reduce the number of catastrophic injuries.

"The FEI is in urgent discussions with the Emirates Equestrian Federation and



Social media users were shocked at the speed Idaho Rabba (left) was travelling on the first loop of the ride

individual event organisers to introduce similar protocols to those used so successfully at the recent event in Bou Thib to reduce the speed."

The FEI had already applied tougher measures to UAE endurance in the 2014/2015 season, after a catalogue of doping, fatality, cheating and ID fraud scandals, when pictures of Bundy perched on two broken forelegs went viral 12 months ago. Public outrage was the tipping point leading to the suspension. However, extensive rule-breaking is still occurring (news, 7 January).

Unlike Bundy, Idaho Rabba's fatal injury is not captured on film.

The Sheikh Hamdan-owned Wollumbin Shahim – whose rider was later hatless – was recorded as "failed to complete" on loop two, although there is no record of his final vetting.

Mr de Mello said Saturday's fatality is being investigated by the UAE federation, in close co-operation with the FEI. Samples are taken from all fatalities to check for prohibited substances under the terms of a legal agreement between the FEI and the UAE. Fatalities in national rides must also now be notified.

"At a similar point in the UAE season last year, there had been three equine fatalities in international events, so the number of deaths at international level has been reduced. But it is clear that we would like to see a similar reduction at national level," he added.

"The official vets are now eliminating more horses at vet gates, meaning completion rates are lower, but this has not yet had the effect of reducing the level of catastrophic injuries at national events."

Four of the previous deaths resulted from fractures. The other was a "sudden death" on the course, he said.

'The FEI is in urgent discussions with the Emirates Equestrian Federation to introduce similar protocols as used successfully at Bou Thib to reduce speed'

Manuel Bandeira de Mello, FEI endurance director

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Endurance

Golden Horseshoe to continue in 2017

THE future of Britain's most famous endurance ride has been secured thanks to the appointment of a new event organiser, but the ride will not go ahead this year.

Exmoor's Golden Horseshoe celebrated its 50th anniversary last year, but the continuation of the event hung in the balance after its long-serving committee chose to step down.

The committee, headed by Barbara Wigley, was struggling to find a replacement team.

However, Mrs Wigley confirmed to *H&H* that a new organiser had stepped in and the ride is expected to continue in 2017.

Research

Pilot project to help combat bullying

A project that uses horses to tackle bullying is under way after a pilot study found a change in attitude from two-thirds of participants.

Equine assisted learning therapist Dr Andreas Liefoghe has been researching bullying for the past 20 years.

He has been working with groups of children in London to help to teach them to cooperate and work together.

At each session, the group is given a set of tasks to complete, for which they have to work as a team with a herd of horses in an arena.

The study began in November and finishes at the end of March.

It follows a successful pilot, funded by the Royal Parks Foundation, which ran in November 2014.

Research

Are horses happy athletes?

MORE research into recognising the mood of horses is needed, according to an equine expert, *writes Lucy Elder.*

Professor Natalie Waran from the University of Edinburgh has called for more studies in the area.

"Unless we develop and use appropriate evidence-based measures and indicators and emphasise their relevance to horse and rider, we will always be at risk of interpreting horse behaviour in relation to our own needs and emotional experience," she said.

Prof Waran made the call while speaking at the International Equitation Science Conference (ISES) in Canada last year.

She was presenting her abstract for a future study on the topic of whether it is possible to tell if a horse is a "happy athlete".

Debates over what happiness is for humans have occurred for thousands of years.

However, what other species need to achieve happiness and how they show it is a complicated issue.

FEI dressage rule 401.1 states that the object of dressage is the development of the horse into a "happy athlete" through harmonious education.

This was debated in depth 12 years ago at the 2004 Global Dressage Forum as a marker and an aim for the sport.

In her abstract, Prof Waran questioned times we take our horse's happiness for granted, such as when they are out in the field.

She said there has been much research into



recognising negative emotions, such as pain, fear and stress, but it is less clear which behaviours could indicate positive feelings.

Four-star eventer and *H&H* blogger Coral Keen said it would be "really interesting" to see results of any research.

"I think that [happiness] is individual for each horse – you know their character and you can tell from that," she told *H&H*.

"It is really important. It is a huge part of success that they are happy doing their job, they have to want to do it."

World Horse Welfare's Tony Tyler added: "Anything which furthers our understanding of how horses think is always beneficial, and I look forward to seeing the results of the study."

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

Matt Ramsden, MFH, p22

'We don't go hunting to have a meet card on the mantelpiece or wear a red coat'

Welfare

Calls escalate to 'crisis' rate

WARNINGS of a "horse crisis" in Kent have been voiced by an animal welfare charity.

The RSPCA has received a spate of calls regarding horses across the county over the past two months.

The charity has had more than 300 calls about horses in Kent already in 2016.

Since 15 November, the charity's officers have attended 21 equine-related call outs involving 25 horses who were dead, dying or

in poor condition.

"We are seeing a spate of dumped horses in the county at the moment, which is extremely shocking and distressing, and needs to stop," said RSPCA inspector Caroline Doe.

"These horses appear to have been transported in vans or pick-up trucks to quiet locations where they are callously abandoned, some while they are still alive, which is quite simply barbaric.

"These horses have been dumped in driveways and fields, on private and public land, with complete disregard for both the animals and the public."

She added that this is pushing their inspectors "to their limits" and putting a strain on the charity's limited resources.

Last year the RSPCA received calls regarding a total of 98 dead horses in Kent, compared to 68 in 2014. **LE**

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▲ HORSEY PHOTOS

An equestrian account has been placed on Instagram's suggested user list and featured on the website's blog. Under the handle @betweentwoears, the photos by Alex Calder chronicle scenic rides.



▲ FERGUSHILL RIDING SCHOOL

The North Ayrshire-based riding school has celebrated its 50th anniversary, raising over £12,000 for Children's Hospice Association Scotland. The riding school was set up by Robert and Evelyn Aitken in 1965.

▲ BADMINTON

Mitsubishi Motors will continue as title sponsor of Badminton Horse Trials until 2019. This year marks 25 years of Mitsubishi Motors' sponsorship of the event and the milestone will be celebrated at the 2016 horse trials, which runs from 4-8 May.



▲ BADBURY RINGS POINT-TO-POINT

The Countryside Alliance's point-to-point at Badbury Rings, near Wimborne, Dorset, celebrates its 10th anniversary this year. The event will be held on 21 February and features six races plus family activities as well as an anniversary raffle.

GOOD WEEK BAD WEEK

▼ A TRAPPED GELDING

A 29-year-old horse was rescued by firefighters in Shropshire after becoming stuck in mud (9 January). He was helped to his feet and is now "recovering well".



▼ PHOTOBOMBS

A photograph of a five-year-old girl in Florida has gone viral. She was photobombed by a Clydesdale named Sparky, who turned his head to one side and bared his teeth for the camera.



▼ AN UNRULY DONKEY

Officers in South Carolina rounded up a loose donkey and sheep using crime scene tape on 13 January. The escaped animals were taken back to their owners.

▼ AN EQUINE RESCUE SANCTUARY

Little Tinkers Sanctuary was burgled for the seventh time in as many months on 8 January. Thieves took rugs and equipment.

Veterinary

Seeing the world the same

EQUINES have similar visual perception to humans and other mammals, according to a recent study, *writes Rachael Hook*.

Three ponies, Ponyo, Nemo and Thomas, were involved in the project.

A computer-controlled touch screen system was used to examine their visual recognition abilities, particularly around size and shape.

The trio were shown different shapes on the screen and when they tapped their muzzles on the "correct" answer, which had been previously chosen by researchers, they received a piece of carrot as a reward.

Results were compared to those from studies of the vision of chimps, humans and dolphins.

The findings implied that the four mammals thought the same sort of shapes were similar.

"It's remarkable that mammals, even with these differences in physical appearance and living environments, evolved to have the same sort of visual perception," said lead researcher Masaki Tomonaga of Kyoto University.

"In terms of shape discrimination, horses exhibited perceptual similarities among shapes with curvatures, vertical or



horizontal lines and diagonal lines.

"Horses were able to make out a difference of 14% in circle size, but showed worse discrimination thresholds than chimpanzees and humans."

The research, published in November, was carried out by Mr Tomonaga, Kiyonori Kumazaki, Florine Camus, Sophie Nicod, Carlos Pereira and Tetsuro Matsuzawa.

The team from Japan and France now hope to explore how these animals interpret what they see.

• For more information visit: rsbl.royalsocietypublishing.org/content/11/11

Charity

Cracking campaign for IJF

STUDENTS have launched a social media campaign to encourage helmet safety among riders.

The Crack the Hat appeal, set up by a group of five students from the Royal Agricultural University (RAU), aims to raise money for H&H's charity of the year, the Injured Jockeys Fund (IJF).

The IJF helps riders and their families who have been affected by injuries (news, 31 December).

In a similar vein to the ice bucket challenge, participants must crack an egg on their head and donate to the charity, before nominating a friend to do the same.

The students were inspired to promote hat safety following William Fox-Pitt's serious fall in Le Lion d'Angers last October.

"The IJF massively



inspires us for the work it does with riders like him," third year student Grace Pugh told H&H.

Grace thought of the idea for one of the modules for her international equine and agricultural business studies degree alongside fellow RAU students Alicia Lee, Anneli Ives, Megan Duffield and Cordelia

Marshall (pictured).

The campaign can be found on Facebook by searching Crack the Hat and on Twitter using the handle @CrackTheHat2k16. To donate, text "HATZ50" with the amount you wish to give to 70070 or visit H&H's JustGiving page: www.horseandhound.co.uk/ijf. RH



H&H IS PROUD TO SUPPORT THE IJF.
TO LEARN MORE AND TO DONATE, VISIT:
www.horseandhound.co.uk/ijf

DIARY DATES 21-28 January

RACING

Watch National Hunt racing at Ascot's Clarence House Chase Day on 23 January. The top race on the card is the Grade One Clarence House Steeple Chase, which features a prize fund of £125,000.
www.ascot.co.uk

JAS

British Eventing's jumping and style series is under way. Bishop Burton College is hosting a competition on 23 January and Solihull Riding Club is also holding one, on 24 January.
www.britisheventing.com

SHOWJUMPING

Arena UK, Lincs, is hosting a three-day jumping show from 22-24 January. Classes range from British novice to 1.30m open.
www.arenauk.com

ARENA POLO

Epsom Polo Club is hosting an "under-21 v the rest" tournament on 24 January.
www.hpa-polo.co.uk



TRADE FAIR

BETA International 2016, the British Equestrian Trade Association's trade fair, will be held at Birmingham's NEC, from 24-26 January.
www.beta-int.com

POINT-TO-POINT

Go to the Royal Artillery point-to-point at Larkhill on 23 January. The Heythrop, North Norfolk Harriers, Tiverton and West Percy also have fixtures on 24 January.
www.pointtopoint.co.uk

SHOWING

The North Yorkshire Showcase is at Harrogate Riding Centre on 24 January.
www.bsps.com

HORSE WATCH

Cheshire's police and crime commissioner will speak about a new horse watch scheme at the Blue Cap, Sandiway, on 28 January.
midcheshirebridleways.co.uk

And finally: a horsey home

LOOKING to give your home a horsey makeover?

Well now you can decorate your house with a personalised equestrian mural, thanks to a new wallpaper service.

Wallpaper Ink takes your own photographs and transforms them into bespoke murals.

Pictures can be uploaded onto its website to create a collage or a blown-up picture of your horse.

"We enable you to create your own feature wall and bring the great outdoors, indoors," said a company spokesman. "Our talented team will merge your photographs to create your own personalised wall mural."

The bespoke service was launched in December and prices start at £26.99 per square metre. **RH**



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Audited Certification digital and print 40,705
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Letters



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LETTER OF THE WEEK

Thank you to tireless show staff

I feel I must say thank you to all the staff, judges and officials who made the recent British Showjumping Premier show at Bury Farm, Bucks, enjoyable despite the Baltic conditions (report, p50).

They work tirelessly for competitors and must feel the temperatures more than us riders due to the sedentary nature of many of their jobs.

Thanks to all the team also for putting on a good schedule with some bigger classes,

which are much needed to help horses step up to jumping bigger tracks.

It was a shame the last day was cancelled, however the decision had to be made early, and at 7am when I stepped out of my lorry it was very snowy and looking like it could get worse.

These shows and the staff deserve all the thanks and support we can give them.

ROSIE MOSS

Hungerford, Berks

The writer of the letter of the week wins a bottle of Champagne Taittinger



HOLD ON TO YOUR HATS

Sir – I have just read the letter from James Crosbie Dawson (31 December).

I have had some amazing days hunting over the past 60 years, but I fell off at a jump in the beginning of December. My [non-safety] hat was badly damaged and I woke up in hospital the next day.

I did not recognise my family, and had undergone head surgery before coming round.

However, I had a wonderful Christmas at home with my grandchildren all around me, and I have had hundreds of letters and cards too. I shall now wear a proper hard hat.

I endorse James Crosbie Dawson's comments and hope our lucky escapes will encourage people to take the safest and most sensible action.

Dickie Jeffreys

Kimmerston, Northumberland

WHIPPING UP A STORM

Sir – Surely fining and banning jockeys for overuse of the whip is shutting the proverbial stable

door after the horse has bolted, as the horse would already have been subjected to excess whipping (news, 14 January).

An answer could be to ban the use of a whip behind the jockeys' legs and permit only a slap down the shoulder for straightening purposes or when asking for a horse to stand off at a jump.

The whip would still be there for safety reasons.

Morag Vallally
Wylam, Northumberland

AN EXCELLENT SCOUNDREL

Sir – Drawing different sections of the horse world together I thought your readers might be interested to know that Headsnook Mischief featuring in the masterclass with Ruth Edge in *H&H* (7 January), is by Kilvington Scoundrel, winner of the Kellythorpes leading sire of the year at Horse of the Year Show (HOYS) for the past four years.

Although best known for his showing progeny, it bears out the theory that if an animal has

athleticism, is trainable and has sound conformation you can teach it to succeed in any discipline. Scoundrel's progeny have excelled in eventing, dressage, pony racing and showing.

Indeed, his granddaughter Rhos Exception was pony of the year at HOYS 2015.

Joanna MacInnes
Penrith, Cumbria

RIDING SCHOOL REVERIE

Sir – Regarding Pammy Hutton's comment (31 December), I will always be grateful to the riding school where I learnt so much in my early teens. We had to start at the bottom and we worked hard and loved it.

First thing in the morning we had to collect the horses and ponies from the field, which was about two miles away. If we were lucky Johnny would take us down piled in the back of his pick-up truck, but if he was busy we walked and rode back bareback, often leading one or two as well. Back at the stables they were groomed and fed, then tacked up ready for the

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day. We were taught how to teach and did a lot of bareback riding and exercises on the ponies, touching toes, swiveling right round the saddle, and lots of others.

After each hour-long ride the ponies had their bridles taken off and girths loosened for 15 minutes, then they were out for another ride. At lunch time they were untacked, brushed, fed and left in peace for an hour until it all started again.

At the end of the day we took them back to the field, and walked back to the stables, which we then mucked out. The tack room was wonderful, with a coke stove in it, and we had to clean all the tack every day. We all got on incredibly well and had such fun.

The culmination of all our hard work was when you were told to take a ride out around the local park. Such pride – it took a couple of years to get to that state. Hard work in all weathers, such fun and first-class grounding in how to look after a horse.

Ann Lloyd

Northern Moor, Manchester

Berks & Bucks Draghounds. He really sparked up and I couldn't hold him – he would go past everyone in a blink of an eye, jumping whatever was in his path. I took him out again, and there were a couple of lovely hedges, over which he soared. It felt like flying.

We then had the best day out I have ever had with the Tedworth. Max had already jumped a nice hedge, when, near the end of the day, we were queuing up for a small jump up a relatively steep hill. I was circling Max because he was very anxious to jump and I didn't want to cut anybody up. Suddenly my reins slipped and Max galloped up to the queue, straight to a five-bar gate. He had seen the gate only four strides before he jumped it – and somehow I stayed on.

At the end of the day the senior joint-master Mirabel Helm said: "Well, we all know who the best jumper of today is!" It was one of my proudest moments, and I'll treasure it forever.

Isabella Butterworth,

Nr Andover, Hants

EDITORIAL COMMENT

THE British Breeders' Awards dinner continues to be a lively affair. As Stallion AI Services' Tullis Matson shared in his acceptance speech for his father Richard's meritorious award, the first of these events he attended had 30 guests. On Saturday night this was the number of tables, equating to 300 guests.

Although nobody would argue we still have far to go, the popularity and credibility of British sport horse breeding continues to gather momentum. There are stand out British establishments breeding some lovely animals suitable for those in the top third of the competition pyramid with the funds to secure them. Regarding the equines appropriate for riders right at the pinnacle of that triangle, the challenge is to ensure that as many as possible secure futures with British riders. After all, the ever-successful Germans take a similar view with their horses as their wines – the good stuff is rarely exported.

Whatever schemes could be implemented to facilitate pairings between individuals with the capital and inclination to own good horses and those Brits with the ability to ride them, it's necessary for all riders to become expert at fostering these often fragile relationships. A professional who does not look after owners does a disservice to any Brit who could do great things with similar levels of support. Who knows where the next great benefactor of British horse sport will come from, but being polite to all should ensure they do not go away.



Sarah Jenkins

Content Director

[@JodhpurJenks](#)

GENDER SPECIFICS

Sir – When did you last hear Paula Radcliffe referred to as a "lady runner" or Jessica Ennis as a "lady heptathlete"? I suggest our commentators' resolution for 2016 should be to refer to John Whitaker and William Funnell as "gentleman riders" – or drop the gender qualification all together.

Catherine Robinson

Clitheroe, Lancs

MAX AND THE FIVE-BAR GATE

Sir – Hunting is my passion, and I would like to share with you how it has transformed my horse.

When I first tried Max out, on a hot August day, he was quite slow. I then tried him out a second time and he was better, so we decided to go ahead and buy him.

I first took him out with the

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‘The best of my fun, I owe it to...’

Warm-up tips...

At the big shows, where the warm-up arena can be very busy, look where you are going. You don't look at the steering wheel when you are driving. If you plan your route, you won't be stopping and turning all the time trying to avoid everyone else.

Saving time...

Be organised. All my horses have their own designated colour and everything is colour-coded so there are no mix-ups. Valerius has red, Pinocchio blue, C Fatal Attraction purple and Touchdown has pink.

When I'm watching TV or films...



I normally fall asleep. I even fell asleep watching *The Lion King* at the cinema – it had been a long day...

Riding hiccups...

At my local riding school, before I discovered the magic of looped reins, I used to ride a cheeky pony who would jump, then just put her head down. I would lose my reins and fall off. This used to happen all the time.

My secret weapon...

My special looped reins – if I didn't have them I might as well take up Western riding.



SOPHIE WELLS

The Paralympic gold medallist on colour-coding, odd shoes and very expensive haylage

My favourite place for a meal out...

If I ever have an afternoon off I go to a restaurant called Lakeside, just a few miles down the road from the yard in Nottinghamshire.

What I would say to my 15-year-old self...

Enjoy the journey. You're always striving to be better and it's easy to move on to the next thing and not appreciate small milestones.

Remembering when...

I was once invited to a charity dinner. I went on my own, and as it was the middle of winter I wore fluffy boots to drive in. I threw a pair of patent black shoes in the back to change into – except they weren't matching. At the end of the dinner I had to go up on the stage. People must have noticed, but no one said anything.

Money-saving secret...

Don't have horses!

Laughing at my horsey blunders...

I once went to squad training and forgot to take any haylage – I couldn't risk giving my horses random haylage, so I paid a taxi driver to pick some up from the yard in Nottinghamshire and bring it all the way to Stow-on-the-Wold.



My earliest equestrian memory...

Sitting on a pony at a friend's birthday party aged three and knowing then that this was what I wanted.

My first pony...

Crystal. She taught me how to sit tight and bounce off cross-country fences – not very well. Maybe I owe it to her that I started specialising in dressage so early on...

My best moment...

London 2012. Trotting into that arena at Greenwich on my perfect dancing partner, Pinocchio, was the best feeling in the world – particularly when the crowd went wild before we had even done anything. H&H

● NEXT WEEK: jockey Aidan Coleman



MY PLAN B: if it hadn't been dressage...

If I hadn't discovered dressage I think I would have gone into sports science for elite sport. That was my area of interest when I left school and started university – I have always been a perfectionist, and helping other people achieve their goals was part of that, too.

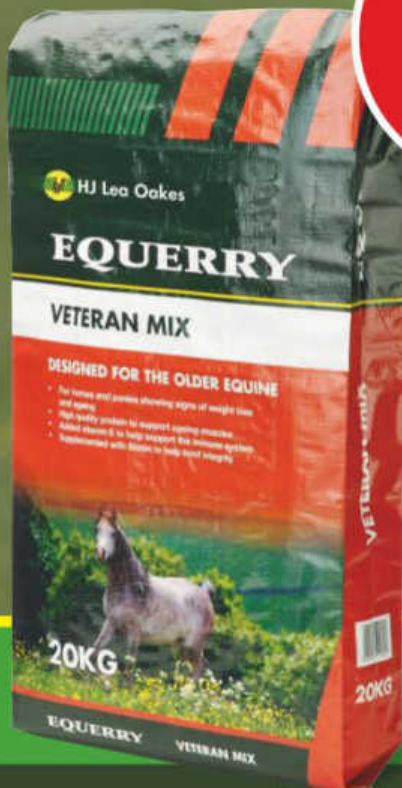
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Research is shedding light on a devastating hoof disease that can affect Connemara ponies. Richard Stephenson MRCVS explains

BREEDERS and potential purchasers of Connemara ponies are being urged to take advantage of a test now available to identify animals that carry a mutated gene responsible for a distressing hoof disease.

Hoof Wall Separation Disease (HWSD) is an inherited condition typified by the dorsal hoof wall splitting away from underlying structures. Affecting both males and females, this defect develops in foals of between one and six months of age – although some cases are not detected until much later in life.

The condition can result in the afflicted pony having to support his weight on the sole of his hooves instead of the dorsal hoof wall. Affected animals can experience severe discomfort despite careful management; their quality of life can diminish and euthanasia may be necessary. Even if the condition is initially controllable, ponies may still develop laminitis over time.

Chronic pain

HWSD affects all four feet, usually equally. It appears that there is an

absence in the hooves of lipids, a type of fat that is normally present and is thought to provide protection to the hoof structure by repelling excess moisture.

Problems usually become apparent when properly fitted shoes are easily pulled off, along with large chunks of hoof wall.

Farriers and vets may be unfamiliar with the condition, which is frequently misdiagnosed as white line disease. Careful inspection, however, reveals that separation is not within the white line but within the horny substance of the hoof wall itself (the “stratum medium” or “tubular horn”; see diagram).

Early recognition and differentiation is vital, to ensure correct management. Treating the condition as white line disease will not work.

HWSD is not a bacterial or fungal disease, and currently only palliative care is possible. Management involves judicious debridement (removal) of damaged and separated hoof wall, followed by reconstruction with a synthetic material.

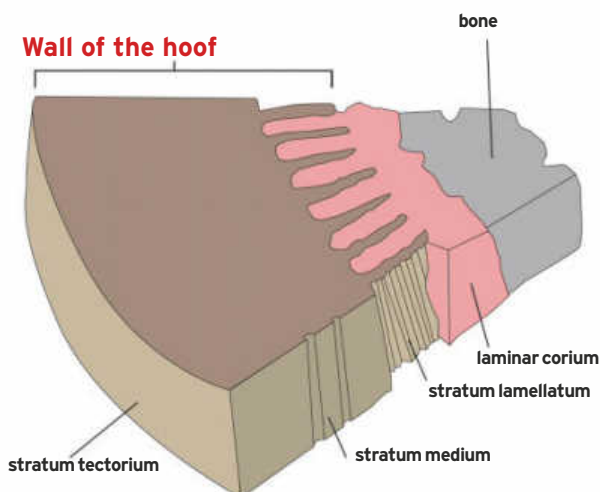
One feature of HWSD is that glues and hoof repair and/or extension

materials do not “stick” to the remaining hoof as well as might usually be expected. Nevertheless, glue-on shoes are probably the best option. Nailing in tends to be unsatisfactory and these are definitely not cases on which barefoot trimming should be attempted.

Silent carriers

CURRENT thinking is that HWSD is a congenital genetic problem. Because the gene causing the disease is recessive, horses can be “carriers” while remaining

HWSD is an inherited condition in Connemaras in which large chunks of hoof wall are easily pulled off, causing severe discomfort and making conventional shoeing problematic



RAISING AWARENESS

"PEOPLE are buying ponies, especially from Ireland, and do not know that HWSD is an issue," says Sheila Ramsay of the Connemara Pony Research Group (CPRG), an international co-operative formed to initiate genetic research into HWSD. Sheila adds that many vets know little about the condition.

"There are vet-checked ponies whose feet start to fall to pieces shortly after arrival in their new homes," she says.

The CPRG, which is independent of any breed society or country, urges breeders to test their ponies, and potential buyers to find out more about HWSD so that they can ask appropriate questions before purchase. Find more resources at: www.connemara-pony.blogspot.com

unaffected themselves – a pony needs to inherit one copy of the HWSD gene from each of his parents before he will show signs of the disease.

If both parents are not affected but carry the recessive gene, any offspring have a one in four chance of having overt HWSD. Two in four will carry the recessive gene but will have no outward signs, while one in four will be normal and will not carry the gene.

Cases have been reported in several countries, including the UK, Ireland, Sweden, New Zealand and the USA.

Surveys in the USA have demonstrated that about 14% of Connemaras carry the HWSD gene.

Breeders in the UK are starting to have their breeding stock tested. Of 53 British Connemara ponies tested recently, seven were carriers of the gene and only one was affected with HWSD.

Until recently the only laboratory testing DNA for HWSD was the Veterinary Genetics Laboratory at UC Davis University in the US. The good news is that the British Connemara Pony Society has now arranged for the Weatherbys DNA Laboratory in Ireland to test for the disease at a cost of €30, or £22 (visit www.weatherbys.co.uk).

Testing is non-invasive, involving sampling of mane hair. **H&H**

● **NEXT WEEK:** the science behind fitness

WHAT'S NEW in the veterinary world?

Can equine eyeballs reveal stress levels – and do semi-feral ponies suffer from gastric ulcers? **Peter Green MRCVS** explains all in his research round-up

THE EYES HAVE IT

STRESS response is a normal, healthy process involved in the switch from "resting and digesting" to "up and ready for action".

Scientists have demonstrated that in a number of species, including horses, the temperature of the eyeballs correlates with the level of stress the animal is experiencing.

Research has proven that the stress levels of showjumpers can be measured by this method. Without touching the horse or taking any samples, scientists can assess stress by pointing a sensitive thermography camera at the eye. The temperature of the eyeball goes up when a horse is stressed.

Spanish scientists have just published work on dressage horses. They measured eyeball temperatures during dressage competitions in 343 stallions aged between four and six. They then compared these temperatures with the dressage scores and analysed the breeding of each stallion.

The first part of the study was as expected: for individual horses, eyeball temperature went up during the test and came down again afterwards. This confirmed that dressage tests are stressful.

But when they compared achievement with stress levels they found that the stallions who appeared more stressed were the ones more likely to score highly. This seems to show that youngsters with an enhanced stress response make better dressage horses – they are literally more "on their toes" when they need to be.

Finally, the scientists showed that there were strong indications that both eyeball temperature and stress in response to performance were highly heritable. This suggests that young potential dressage horses might be screened for future achievement by measuring the rise in the temperature of their eyeballs when they are in training as juveniles.

NEW FINDINGS ON ULCERS

GASTRIC ulcers are a well-recognised problem in domesticated horses.

Glandular ulcers affect the bottom part of the stomach submerged below the acid gastric juices, while squamous ulcers occur higher up where acid sloshes up only during exercise and immediately after eating (see vet clinic, 17 and 24 December).

Current wisdom is that ulcers are caused by stress, exercise and relatively unnatural intensive feeding for performance.



So we would predict that semi-feral Exmoor and Dartmoor ponies, animals that live a life just about as close to that of a wild horse as possible, would not be bothered by gastric ulcers. After all, they simply eat, breed and mooch about like the wild horse before domestication.

A recent study had surprising results. Scientists carried out postmortem examinations of the stomachs of 60 horses that had been kept in fully domesticated conditions, and 29 feral ponies from the moors. The samples were all taken from animals slaughtered in mid-summer, when grazing was at its best and the predicted environmental stress at its lowest.

When the stomachs were examined, both kinds of ulcer were found in more than 60% of fully domesticated horses – a higher figure than expected. Even more unexpected was the finding that one or other kind of ulcer occurred in more than 20% of the wild ponies.

There are several possible explanations for this. Perhaps ulcers can form really quickly and the moorland ponies developed them between round-up and slaughter. Or maybe they are not living such an idyllic, stress-free, wild lifestyle after all.

It could be that gastric ulcers are a product of domestication, reflecting the fact that moorland ponies are domesticated ponies that have become feral – rather than truly wild equids such as zebras.

FURTHER READING

● **STRESS:** *Applied Animal Behaviour Science*, DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/doi:10.1016/j.applanim.2015.11.006>.

● **ULCERS:** *Equine Veterinary Education*, Dec 2015, p655-657.



Matt Ramsden MFH

Ahead of his move to the Duke of Beaufort's, the Bedale master and huntsman talks to Adrian Dangar about safeguarding the sport and avoiding pretensions

CHRISTMAS Eve may not be an obvious date to pin anyone down for a serious chat, let alone a Master of Foxhounds (MFH) during the busy holiday period — but Bedale master and huntsman, Matt Ramsden, is more than happy to swing by for a cup of tea after an away day with the neighbouring Sinnington Hunt only hours before Christmas.

“Good day, proper fun,” says the 28-year-old amateur huntsman as he strides into our kitchen wearing muddy boots and elegant bespoke fawn

breeches. This is Matt's third outing this week; however, the Boxing Day fixture in 48 hours' time will be his last with the Bedale, for on 1 May he assumes the same position with the prestigious Duke of Beaufort's in Gloucestershire.

Matt admits to feeling a degree of trepidation about taking on the opportunity of a generation, and surprise that he was asked to consider the role after just five seasons at the sharp end of hunting.

“There is still much left to achieve with the Bedale — it's a special hunt whose supporters are warm, welcoming

and fun,” he says. “I thought long and hard about the Beaufort offer, but realised I would spend the rest of my life wondering what might have been had I turned it down.”

A way of life

BROUGHT up on the family farm in North Yorkshire, hunting has been a way of life for Matt since childhood, when his father — as did his father before him — hunted the West of Yore foxhounds.

“We used to get up in the dark and go earth stopping every Saturday during winter, then rush home for breakfast

before hunting," he remembers. When Tom Ramsden retired Tim Easby took the hounds on and encouraged the former master to come out as much as possible.

"Tim was very generous to us," Matt recalls. "Dad and I went off on point together and rode wide. That's really when the hunting bug bit me — and I resolved to do something about it."

A summer working at the Warwickshire Hunt kennels was followed by a course at the Royal Agricultural College (RAC) where, in his first year, the young Nimrod hunted 86 days and still found time to attend the occasional lecture. Being appointed master of the RAC Beagles for the 2008/09 season provided invaluable experience in handling a pack of hounds, and an opportunity to get to know many of the farmers across whose land he will soon be riding.

"I was knocked out by the generous welcome extended to the beagles,"

Matt says. "There is an incredible hunting infrastructure in the Beaufort country, where so many farmers don't just accept the hunt, they expect hounds over their land on a regular basis."

During his final year at Cirencester the absentee student worked full-time in the North Cotswold kennels under the watchful eye of kennel-huntsman Nick Hopkins, "the consummate professional". In a neat twist of fate, Nick will become Matt's kennel-huntsman at Badminton next May.

"That was a busy time," Matt remembers. "As well as helping in the kennels I whipped-in to Nigel Peel MFH three days a week and worked two afternoons at the college. I often sat at my computer until the small hours, then snatched a couple of hours' sleep before seeing to the hounds in kennels."

There was little time for much else then, although Matt enjoys the summer pursuits of cricket (he achieved his first century for the local village side last year) and fishing when possible.

With form like that, it's no surprise that Matt was selected to follow the legendary Captain Ian Farquhar MFH, who carried the horn at Badminton from 1985 until 2011.

"Having Ian as my joint-master was a draw in itself," Matt says. "He is a long-standing hero for a generation of huntsmen and has bred a pack whose stallion hounds are used all over the

country. Upholding that quality will be a team effort, but it's still an enormous responsibility."

Farquhar's successor will face numerous other challenges, for Badminton has been described as the spiritual home of foxhunting.

"There will be many more people out than I am used to, and the eyes of the hunting world will be upon me," Matt predicts. "It's going to be a bit of a goldfish bowl to start with, but I will put my head down and get on with it. I won't be hunting hounds any differently; just doing what I feel is right and working out the best way forward."

'The law must change'

HAVING served on the Masters of Foxhounds Association (MFHA) committee for the past two years, the Duke of Beaufort's future joint-master is no stranger to the difficulties facing hunting today, or the measures that are being taken to safeguard the sport.

"Hunting has flourished since the ban and is better supported than ever," he affirms. "However, it's important that we don't lie back and think that's good enough, because it isn't. The law must change and we will continue to work towards one that is more sympathetic, understanding and reasonable than the current unworkable regulations."

Matt insists the biggest casualty of the Hunting Act is the fox itself, and laments the

decline of the species, from respected quarry to lowly vermin that has every man's hand against him.

I ask bachelor Matt — although a girlfriend from the Sinnington country may lie behind his day out there on Christmas Eve — whether he considers himself to be a traditionalist or modernist in his approach to hunting.

"Nothing as pretentious as either," he laughs, "probably somewhere between the two."

Although the Bedale has maintained traditions, Matt has no axe to grind with hunts that have worked out a different way forward.

"We don't go hunting to have a meet card on the mantelpiece or wear a red coat," he reasons. "The most important thing is to keep the country open and provide good sport — and that's what I will be striving to achieve at Badminton." **H&H**

● **NEXT WEEK: driving champion Boyd Exell**

IN PICTURES



From top: judging the foxhounds at Builth Wells in 2013; while at college, Matt whipped-in three days a week at the North Cotswold to Nigel Peel (right); Matt is in his fifth season carrying the horn at the Bedale in his role as master and huntsman; judging the bitch hounds at the Peterborough Royal Foxhound Show last summer alongside Ian McKie MFH

Move it like... Laura Collett

The four-star eventer on perfect transitions, partnerships and psyching up with *Grey's Anatomy*

I like to vary the horses' work to keep them interested. I'm lucky that I have a lot of great riding where I live, so I do most of my schooling out on the hacks. It keeps the horses more enthusiastic than going round in circles in the school. I make sure every transition is perfect, wherever it is done.

I don't like to over-jump the older horses. When they do jump I prefer gymnastic grids as they make the horses work hard and improve their technique.

The intermediate and above horses go to the gallops twice a week but my novices do their canter work out hacking.

I'm mindful that each horse is different so I make plans for the individual horses each day, rather than having a set routine.

Trust is vital between an event horse and rider, and I have found it easier to produce horses from scratch myself. I like to create a bond with the horse on the ground and in the saddle, which starts at an early age and just keeps building.

● **NEXT WEEK:** dressage rider Roland Tong

Dealing with nerves

● I get very nervous before a big competition. Once I have done my final walk of the cross-country, I like to be on my own.

● I watch DVDs in the lorry to help me relax before getting ready. My lorry is full of *Gossip Girl*, *90210* and *Grey's Anatomy* DVDs.

Power and control

● A great exercise is three bounce cross-poles, then one stride to an oxer. The horse has to use controlled power for the cross-poles, then explosive power to open up over the oxer.

● If a horse is jumping left or right, I use inverted V-rails on the oxer to keep them straight.

● This exercise helps me be aware of controlling my upper body not to move too quickly over the cross poles.

In the gym

● I never used to do extra exercise but after my fall in 2013, I spent a long time at Oaksey House gym (part of the Injured Jockeys Fund, H&H's charity of the year) and saw the benefits it had on my riding. Plus it prevented my back from getting sore.

● I struggle to find time to go regularly in the season, but I build up my core strength and cardio fitness before the season starts.

Building trust

● Cross-country demands a lot of trust. Before I take horses schooling I build skinnies and angles in the arena, where the environment is more controlled.

● The most important things are to reward the horse when things are going right, and plenty of repetition until you have built up the trust. **H&H**



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Laura Tomlinson riding Capri Sonne Jr
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Image by Risto Aaltonen



Todd and... his triumphant past

HOT TODDY is by Glacial Storm out of Technical Merit, by Gala Performance, and has eight point-to-point wins to his name, plus one in a hunter chase and one under Rules.

"His favourite going was on firm ground, just confirming what a tough cookie he is," says Jo Hunter.

Todd and... going wild

ACCORDING to Jo Hunter, Todd soon goes feral if turned away.

"What a palaver I would have when trying to catch him," she says. "I would have to bring in absolutely every other horse to convince him to leave the field."





Todd and... his youthful looks

THIS handsome 16.2hh gelding is well known in Barlow country for his engaging personality and youthful good looks. However, hunt groom Sarah Fuller admits she did hear Todd referred to as “a lovely old fossil” recently.

Todd and... being hard as nails

TODD missed hunting when *H&H* went out with the Barlow last season. While grooming and bathing him for the big day, Sarah Fuller discovered a nail in his foot.

“It left a huge hole in his foot. Todd missed out on hunting but, typically, he was never lame on it,” she says.

Hot Toddy

The tough ex-racehorse who turned to hunt service at the ripe old age of 18, and turns up his nose at mere members of the field

PETER PAN might have been a more appropriate name for Todd, a striking bay thoroughbred who shows little sign of slowing down despite fast approaching his 21st birthday.

“You’d never pick him out as an old horse,” says Joan Williams, joint-master of the Barlow, where Todd has been at kennels for the past three seasons.

“Hot Toddy, as he was known, spent the best part of a decade in training and had a successful career with wins point-to-pointing and under Rules, often ridden by Richard Burton,” Joan continues. “He was trained by Guy Landau, who also did some showing with him.”

Todd was bought by Barlow regular Jo Hunter when he was 14.

“He’d qualified for pointing with the Meynell, so wasn’t a stranger to hunting and certainly enjoyed it,” says Jo. “He did 51 days one season with me but when I broke my leg he had to be turned away for a year. Todd recharged his batteries to such an extent that I soon realised he needed more work than I could ever give him.”

As Todd was already 18, Jo mentioned to another master, Chris White, that she thought sending him to the happy hunting ground might be the kindest solution.

“Chris said, ‘No way. We’ll give that horse a job.’ I gifted him to the hunt and he hasn’t looked back. It has given Todd a new lease of life,” Jo says. “He just loves carrying a man in a red coat and I swear he looks down his nose at other horses now that he’s a professional.”

Despite this snootiness, Todd is a favourite due to his kind and willing temperament.

“He’s a lovely old boy,” says Kevin Murray (pictured, at the Barlow), who has ridden him as whipper-in and now huntsman. “He is never sick or sorry. I remember once hopping off to do a gate and seeing he had a flap of skin hanging from a leg. He’d just carried on as normal and was never lame on it.”

“He’s a donkey exercising but lights up when he sees hounds. He loves to be surrounded by them and is one of those horses that really watches them so you don’t really need to steer. Trotting he seems to go nowhere, but kick him into a canter or gallop and he flies. His preferred way to jump is flat out, which I guess is a throwback to his racing days.”

Most of the obstacles in Barlow country are stone walls and hunt jumps.

“The other day Todd jumped an awkward wall onto a road ever so neatly from a trot, so he proves that you’re never too old to learn,” says Joan. “He’s built up a tremendous rapport with our apprentice kennelman and pretty much taught him to ride. He is a shining example of what rich lives retired racehorses can lead. He just keeps on giving.” **H&H**

● **NEXT WEEK:** thoroughbred sire Presenting



Are black beauties back?

No longer the poor relations in the show ring, Fells and Dales look to be enjoying something of a renaissance, says **Nicola Jane Swinney**

“IT’S the *Black Beauty* thing,” says Bill Ireland, and there is the distinct impression that he’s not entirely joking. He bought his first Dales to have some fun with.

“He was supposed to be 15 years old and turned out to be about 22. I rode him for a little while, but I didn’t like riding so I started driving and did some in-hand showing,” he recalls. “Then he got arthritis so I looked around for something else. Everyone told me I was stupid to buy a stallion, that I’d never keep him in the field, but I’ve never liked being told what to do.”

And thankfully for the Dales breed, he didn’t pay any attention. Bill went ahead and bought Slaypits Black Magic, who became the foundation stallion for the renowned Kilmannan Stud, which has racked up championship after championship, including the prestigious ridden mountain and moorland (M&M) title at Olympia. When Kilmannan Black Pearl landed the accolade in 2002 — then held under the auspices of the National Pony Society — he was the first, and only, Dales to do so.

However, in December, the Dales breed’s close cousin, the Fell, was crowned the Blue Chip BSPS Heritage supreme ridden M&M. Becki Penny’s six-year-old stallion Townend Schubert became only the second Fell to land this native pony accolade since the final was first held in 1978 — the first was Lunesdale Lucky Lady in 1992.

In a contest that has been dominated by the pony-of-the-moment, the Connemara, and the flashy Welsh breeds, the Fells and Dales have been the poor relations. But is that about to change?

A renaissance?

LAST July, a Fell called Murthwaite Mercy fetched the highest-ever recorded price at auction, 7,000gns (£7,350) and this year, the Dales Pony Society (DPS) celebrates its centenary and is planning several events to raise the breed’s profile. Add to those Schubert’s Olympia triumph, and perhaps the black pearls of the north are about to enjoy a renaissance.

For the Dales, it is not before time. It is listed as “critical” by the Rare Breeds Survival Trust, meaning there are fewer than 300 registered breeding females.

**‘A special flamboyance’:
Townend Schubert
becomes the second
Fell in 37 years to be
supreme ridden
M&M at Olympia**



'A beautiful hairy Fell in full flight, mane and tail flying': Murthwaite Windrush, the first grey Fell to qualify for Horse of the Year Show

"Numbers have fallen recently and for the past few years have been steady at about 85 foals a year," says Jo Ashby, honorary secretary of the Dales Pony Society. "But there are more adult ponies than this figure signifies. The reasons for the low foaling numbers are two-fold: the first being that the breeders hate to breed unwanted foals and, when the market is



The Queen, as patron of the Fell Pony Society, is a supporter of the breed, and last summer bought another Fell pony at auction

depressed, the mares are not used for breeding until there is a demand. Secondly, most mares are riding and/or driving animals of the highest calibre, and many owners have no wish to breed from them. The society feels the gene pool is reasonable, but foaling numbers give cause for concern."

This is echoed by Bill, who has cut back his breeding operation, despite its consistent success — in one year, 2009, there were five Kilmannan ponies qualified for Horse of the Year Show (HOYS). He says that there is no point in producing ponies when there is not the demand for them.

"I'm a firm believer that you don't breed indiscriminately. So many people still do it and it does no good at all," he stresses. "But the Dales has become more popular. The show ring used to be quite bare of Dales ponies, but you see more now. They have caught on, which I'm pleased about.

"The true Dales boys don't think they should be ridden, only be shown in-hand. I told them years ago that if they want to sell ponies in the future, they will have to be ridden. When they got involved with Olympia, of course, they had to start galloping."

Anna Pennell, who started breeding Dales ponies in 2002 under her family's Nipna prefix, is another huge fan of the breed, but she is concerned that show-ring fashions may prove detrimental in the long term.

"Sometimes in mixed classes the important characteristics of the breed are seen as conformational faults, when they are part of its inherent make-up," she says. "They are there because of the working history of the Dales pony and really must be treasured. Without that nicely sloping pastern, and its good length, you don't get the brilliant action. Without all the features that make a Dales, you run the risk of creating an amorphous native show pony and I do worry that it's a genuine risk to all our native ponies."

Becki agrees: "What was interesting at Olympia was that there was one judge who was a Fell and Dales man and another who was a show pony man, who both did the ride. The show pony man was rewarding serpentine, while the other one was penalising people for them. What people forget is that Fells are bred to trot, so they are actually not designed to do serpentine."

'Extremely laid-back'

THE Fell is in better shape than its north-eastern cousin, with the Fell Pony Society reporting that foal registrations annually exceeded 400 in the first decade of the 21st century.

DO YOUR RESEARCH

IF you think a Fell or Dales would suit you, it is essential to do your research before you buy.

"Visit as many studs as you can and see what the emphasis is on for breed type," says Jenny Crane. "Go to the breed show and talk to the breed lovers; they will be glad to help you pick your first Fell.

"Don't go with fashion, with a hybrid riding pony; stick to breed type. I always judge my Fells from the bottom up, foot and bone all the way."

Anna Pennell suggests much the same if the Dales is your choice: "As well as visiting the breed show, try contacting several breeders and seeing and meeting the ponies," she says. "The majority of us love showing off our ponies and chatting about Dales all day long, whether we have ponies for sale or not."

She believes that they make good all-round family animals, but sounds a note of warning: "They have a typical native brain and will use it for cheeky means if it's not put to good use. They are never nasty, but they can think themselves hilarious."



The July auction that realised the record price for Murthwaite Mercy, to an unnamed American buyer, followed the death of Thomas Capstick, a renowned Fell breeder who kept one of the few semi-feral herds allowed to run on the Howgill Fells. In total, the American purchaser spent more than £22,000, and another pony, Murthwaite Taylor Maid, was knocked down to a representative of The Queen. A great Fell enthusiast and patron of the Fell Pony Society, The Queen paid £2,850 for the pony, not the first she has bought from Murthwaite.

If that name is familiar, it may be due to one of the most striking Fells, Jenny Crane's almost pure white Murthwaite Windrush. The now 14-year-old stallion was supreme in-hand at the Fell stallion show in 2013 and became the first grey Fell ever to qualify for HOYS, where he stood out wonderfully. Like the Dales, the breed is predominantly black, but brown, bay and grey are also seen.

Jenny is perhaps best known for the Fell stallion Rackwood Robin and before him Sleddale Jeffrey, who was supreme M&M at Royal Windsor and graced the front cover of *Horse & Hound*.

"There are many things that attract me to the Fell; they are easy to keep, happy to live with others and the majority are extremely laid-back," says Jenny. "Their flamboyance is extremely special — there is nothing better to watch in the show ring than a beautiful hairy Fell in full flight with his mane and tail flying."

If you watch "Windy" powering round the ring, you can see what she means. He couldn't be anything but a Fell. Except perhaps a Dales. The simplest, but not infallible, way of differentiating between the two is to think "Dales and tails" — the breed traditionally sports a ribbon in its tail. This goes back to when the ponies were exhibited in village shows and fairs; stallions also wore a ribbon at the wither. Although some factions wished to end the practice, breeders such as Bill Ireland wanted it to continue.

"It is difficult to tell the two breeds apart; even I struggle sometimes," admits Bill. "For me, the Dales is more forward-going with a more pony-type head. My Dales have always had very 'pony' heads, which come from Slaypits Black Magic — he always produced a nice, small head. A Dales pony is supposed to be

BRED FOR A JOB

THE mining, clothing and fuel industries in the north of England shaped the fortunes of the Fell, which was native to Cumbria, and the Dales, from the eastern slopes of the Pennines. Both were based on the defunct Scottish Galloways — tough, hardy, little creatures that ran on the Fells. As far back as the winter of 1492/93, 11 Kendal traders made a total of 14 journeys to Southampton with pack ponies carrying loads of cloth. Later, strong, hardy and fast pack ponies were used to carry "pigs" of lead — a pig weighed 120lb, and the ponies would carry two at a time — in gangs of nine to 20, led by one rider, while Fells were used by the northern collieries well into the 20th century.

Although aficionados will stress the differences between two, the breeds are inextricably linked, as Jo Ashby at the Dales Pony Society explains: "Dales blood was used to rescue the Fell pony breed in the 1920s when the Fells were the critically rare breed, and some Fell pony has been used in the Dales studbook in the 1950s and 1960s, when the Dales numbers were at their lowest. Today they still retain their old type, and have changed little in the past 100 years, making them a good choice as a sound and unspoilt native breed."

Kilmannan Black Pearl, the first and only Dales to win the ridden M&M title at Olympia

able to drink out of a teacup. Slightly exaggerated, perhaps, but I don't like an ugly, coarse head."

Becki is more specific: "The way I would describe it, if you look at a Fell's head from the front it should be flat; the Dales has a bridge to the nose. But ponies that do well in the show ring in general don't necessarily do well at the breed show. I'm lucky that Schubert seems to fit both criteria, but he is very small — he's only just over 13hh. I'm 5ft so he suits me, but I was afraid he would look tiny against the other ponies at Olympia."

Her fears, of course, proved groundless, but it is perhaps his presence — that show-ring essential — that marked Schubert out. And that applies equally to the Dales.

Anna is just as enthusiastic: "There is no better feeling on this earth than riding a Dales pony trotting at full stretch as they take flight. They can keep up with any horse cantering without breaking out of their trot and the power is second to none.

"They have the fire and passion never to be dull, yet have the brain and sense to look after themselves and their riders; they are hardy and hard-working, can survive on very little and have the best limbs and feet."

So despite the low numbers, the future is far from bleak for these black beauties. Conquering Olympia in 2015 — in 2016, the world? **H&H**

Slaypits Black Magic, Bill Ireland's foundation stallion for the Kilmannan Stud. He exemplifies the breed's pony-type head — 'A Dales pony is supposed to be able to drink out of a teacup,' says Bill



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Blue skies: huntsman Sam Clifton with the Green Spring Valley hounds, overlooking fantastic views in Maryland, USA

American adventures



Green Spring Valley, Orange County, Keswick, Piedmont, Midland, Live Oak, Woodford

November 2015

By Octavia Pollock

FLAGS were flying above white-railed paddocks when the Green Spring Valley Hounds met at the old Vanderbilt racing stables of Sagamore, restored to glittering perfection. It was a spectacular setting to start an adventure that took in seven packs in five states across the south-eastern US. Here, every field can be reached by a jump, road signs exhort drivers to slow for hounds and hunt vehicles are emblazoned with logos without fear of reprisals: hunting paradise.

At Green Spring, racing saddles abound, and almost everyone I met was a jockey or trainer, from my host George Hundt Jr, who won the Maryland Hunt Cup in 2009, to

three-time winner Billy Meister and 16-time participant Jack Griswold. Thankfully, we steered clear of the Cup's terrifying 5ft timber fences, although I'm sure my horse, Edward, lent by Marjorie and John Warner, would have made little of them.

Sam Clifton's level pack of crossbred hounds ignored the blustery wind to give us some swift runs across luscious old turf, Sheila Brown MFH leading the first field at a tremendous pace.

We flew coops and rails without a check, across a stream and up to the top of a hill with views to the kennels. Hounds marked one of the many foxes to ground, but digging out is unknown; the chase is the thing. Such is the speed that hunt days tend to be

short, but a feast of crab cakes and cocktails laid on by Sagamore Racing meant I didn't mind finishing in sunlight.

My next stop was Virginia, the home of hunting in America, where the town of Middleburg is dedicated to all things horse and hound. My host was John J.

(Jake) Carle II, huntsman and master of the Keswick for 35 years and a respected hound judge. He kept me entertained with stories, from the time he held up a train when on a fast run to the

handsome doghound that admired himself in puddles.

Our first visit was to Orange County, in ridiculously hot temperatures, where Reg Spreadborough's beautiful red and white American hounds gave us a fun time skittering through woods and over coops.

Light and neat, they have tremendous noses and resonant voices, and although the heat meant I didn't see them run as strongly as they can, we had to keep our wits about us to stay in touch.

Englishman Reg, himself hugely respected, is a great admirer of the American hound: "If you send them to England, they'll speak alone and be ignored, but they're always right," he says.

Joint-master John Coles, who provided my handsome thoroughbred Blackjack, kept us in touch, shadowed by polo player and former jockey Peter Walsh, who makes nothing of riding with only one working arm, and Christa Schmidt, who makes the four-hour drive here from Pennsylvania every week. A well-deserved tribute to a flourishing pack.

An Irish-American blend
IRISHMAN Tony Gammell, huntsman of the Keswick, is

'The whipper-in could tell the pack was on a bobcat before finding the coyote, just from the music'



equally enamoured of the American hound. I was privileged to ride with him and watched as he listened patiently to his sharp, independent pack to tell him what they thought.

"Scenting conditions don't make any difference with this lot," he laughs when I expressed hope in the cloudy weather.

Whatever the case, we had a whirlwind spin around crops, across rolling grass and through beech woods where even dry leaves underfoot didn't slow the pace. My mount, Sally Lamb's Bertha, was keen as mustard; thank goodness for a patient huntsman who didn't mind me in his pocket.

Tony landed the job when, on an unplanned visit, hounds flew straight to him.

"There was an instant connection," remembers Jake, who laid the foundation of Keswick breeding.

Tony has a novel way of adding country: once, with hounds flying, he jumped a gate



The Orange County's distinctive red and white American hounds: 'with tremendous noses and resonant voices'

onto uncleared land. The owner said it was the most thrilling thing he'd ever seen and immediately opened his farm. I could easily imagine him succumbing to the mix of Irish charm and American speed.

The potential brilliance of a Piedmont day in their best Mellon country failed to materialise as rain meant all but one fox was underground, but one hardy soul gave us a thrilling point along forest tracks and across steep fields, before going to ground.

I slithered down to join huntsman Jordan Hicks at the earth as he praised his smart crossbred hounds, mainly American with a dash of Old English.

North Carolina-born Jordan combines Southern ease with keen instinct. He kept drawing on with determination, the hounds keeping their noses down despite the lack of vulpine presence.

"They have amazing voices," said field master Tad Zimmerman MFH. "You must come back to hear them!"

The quiet spell allowed me to hear stories of when Jackie Kennedy hunted here and how India-born physician Vas Devan was instantly hooked when he heard a hunt go by. There were


coops everywhere – Jordan built 75-plus last summer – which I popped on Stormy, provided by whipper-in Michelle St Onge, and views of red orioles and bald eagles reminded me that we were far from the Shires.

Southern comfort

THE one drawback to Virginia is its popularity. As in the UK, urban sprawl impinges on open landscape; the Orange County kennels, for instance, are cut off from much of their country by a four-lane highway. Further south, there are few such concerns: I lost phone signal long before I saw the lights of High Log Lodge, the Alabama

base of the Midland Fox Hounds.

Founded by Benjamin Hardaway III, this hunt is the result of a lifelong passion born from hearing foxhound music in childhood, an absorbing story told in his memoirs *Never Outfoxed*. Now 96, he still lives by the kennels in Columbus, Georgia, and hounds are hunted by his son-in-law, Mason Lampton, with professional Ken George from the Moingona, Iowa.

The lodge was crammed with members, a close-knit group who regularly make the two-hour trip from the wooded country of Columbus to the dairy fields of Fitzpatrick. The hunt can go anywhere, thanks 



Eight members of the Lampton family gather for the Midland meet in Alabama



Hacking home after a hot and sunny day with the Live Oak in Florida. These hounds have enjoyed huge success in the show ring, as well as showing great sport



Midland huntsman Ken George leaps into a pond to retrieve a coyote carcass

to friendly farmers and a proliferation of coops, which Mary Lu Lampton's Firewood jumped for fun.

Mason invited me up with him to watch this renowned pack in action, the mix of crossbred with the blue-mottled, racy Julys as effective as legend. Despite warm sun, hounds puzzled out a line, doubling back through dense covert and into the open past a lake,

beyond which we viewed a dark red coyote. We charged in pursuit, over a coop and past a boggy creek to finish at the shores of a pond. Ken reached it first, reporting that the coyote had been rolled by July bitch Rambler and was now lurking in the pond. Countess led the swim to the swift, fierce finish and Mason blew the kill as Benjamin Hardaway arrived in his Silver Fox jeep. Heroically,

Ken plunged in to get the carcass, almost swamped by eager hounds, and I was honoured to receive the brush. Another blistering gallop capped the day and we hacked back across heavy kaolin clay for a picnic in welcome shade.

The next day, bouncy little Texas proved just the horse for winding forest tracks and, after a breathless corkscrew run, the pack killed alone in a swamp. It was an impressive tally: coyote run hard and straight, and are seldom caught, but even half this pack was equal to the task.

The rest had been gathered from a different line and hacked back with us, never leaving Mason even as their fellows' voices grew louder in triumph. A notable example of the "golden thread". The Lampton grandchildren were first on the scene and Henry, 10, was thrilled to be awarded the brush.

The best foundations

AFTER a morning hound walk in Columbus amid waving sterns – this is a particularly happy pack – I drove across Georgia to the border with Florida and the famous Live Oak Hounds. There

can't be a better hunting education than that learnt from Capt Ronnie Wallace and Benjamin Hardaway, and that is exactly what Marty Wood enjoyed. He founded the Live Oak in 1974 and was joined in the mastership by his wife, Daphne, in 1976. They have overseen a breeding programme that has brought unparalleled success on the flags without ever sacrificing ability in the field. The day I visited, the pack included Fable, grand champion at Virginia in 2011, to name but one.

A frosty start yielding to hot sun meant scent was appalling (proved later by the inability of gundogs to detect fallen birds inches away), but these hounds are exceptional and we had a fast spin along dirt tracks, around peanut and cotton fields and through pine plantations. I had the ideal guide, whipper-in Piper Parrish, who could tell the pack was on a bobcat before finding the coyote, just from the music, and my horse, Lefty, was glued to the action.

Until a few years ago, Marty hunted hounds himself, but has now yielded the horn to Dale

DEEP SOUTH DELICACIES

A good bag of quail

LIFE at Live Oak revolves around hunting, as befits the Deep South. On a crystal-clear morning, we went quail shooting from Tennessee walking horses, with pointers transported on a specially designed wagon pulled by two handsome mules (pictured, below).

It felt as if we had gone back in time. We meandered through a pine plantation, left wild for the birds, and dismounted to shoot whenever the dogs froze on point.

Quail are tiny and swift, but we got a good bag, destined to be roasted in butter and served with wild rice and local pecans, the sweet meat melting in the mouth. There's no need for a grocery store on this remote stretch of the Florida/Georgia border.



Barnett and follows on four wheels. His are mechanical, but the large field was joined by Ken and Diane Linthacum who were driving a smart pony and trap. With a pack of this quality, it's not surprising that its members are just as stylish.

I had one last stop to make, to the Woodford in Kentucky. Foul weather revealed the hard-core followers: Diana Swain, Claire Goff, 12, and Michelle Primm, owner of my coloured powerhouse Milk Punch. Yorkshire-born huntsman Glen Westmoreland and his wife,

Sharon, were unfazed, as was Irish-born Robert Lyons MFH. Hounds found immediately on heathland and took off for a limestone ravine, before drawing a patch of tall grass. There, they forced a raccoon into a tree, which laughed down at the frantic pack before bowing to the inevitable end. Not a typical quarry, but raccoons carry equine disease EPM, so it was a good kill.

I'm already counting the days before I can return for more coops and coyotes, feasts and foxes. Tally ho, y'all! **H&H**



Piedmont huntsman Jordan Hicks with the mainly American-bred hounds

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The Berkeley, Berkeley, Glos

2 January

By Rebecca Jordan

THE Berkeley hounds had the sweetest of cry. Their music arresting and yet so pure – each hound pitch perfect. They sang with joy, relief and verve.

Hounds all over the country have struggled to hit any note this season. Patience is running short and some hounds have picked up on this vibe from huntsmen under tremendous pressure to provide sport for both subscribers and their beloved wards.

Stock farms in the Berkeley Vale are renowned for being wet. But even this pack has struggled with scenting conditions. Hounds ran well as ever in the afternoon on Boxing Day, where 6,000 well-wishers joined them in Thornbury. But it was still too warm on the morning we visited.

There was no more fitting setting than the folly in the deer park at Berkeley Castle. It was built in 1816, possibly to celebrate the 600th anniversary of the signing of the Magna Carta. It was at Berkeley the barons of the West Country met before setting out for Runnymede in 1215.

There was a 70-strong gathering of horses at the meet kindly hosted by Harry and Laura Marshall, friends of joint-master Henry Berkeley. Despite the vast crowd, there was a very warm welcome to visitors. Victoria Ludlow, from the East Kent with West Street, was back for the second time, as were the Chepstow-based Peckham sisters Katie, 15, and Lucy, 13. Tim Lewin is more of a regular having hunted here since giving up the mastership at the Ledbury.

Hon secretary Tom Whittaker, who has held office since 1999 and – I suspect – is the backbone of this hunt, wasted no time offering port before the meet. Sally van Eeghen and Kate Eugster introduced their horses: Sally confessed she was riding her piece of rough; Kate her midlife crisis. Confirming this was Dave



Hounds meet at the folly in the deer park at Berkeley Castle. The castle is the oldest building in the country still inhabited by the family who built it

Guiding, well known in these parts for hirelings. His passion is hunting, his weakness hound puppies. He walked 17 couple last year.

Countryman Ricky Coombe is also responsible for the 250 red and 150 fallow deer in the 400-acre medieval park. He lives at the gates to the deer park from where huntsman Michael Stokes led Ricky's seven-year-old daughter, Tahlia, up front with the hounds to the folly. This is one pack you can guarantee will never riot on deer.

Ricky looked as though he had just stepped off the set of *Miami Vice*. He was sporting sunglasses to protect an eye penetrated by a 7mm blackthorn in early December.

The park was unique. This risen landscape looked down on banks of the swollen River Severn and its vale. The park itself resembled an old battlefield interspersed with fenced spinneys set against tightly grazed ancient turf,



A former joint-master of the Ledbury, Tim Lewin is a regular with the Berkeley

solitary saplings defeated by deer and grassy hummocks. It transpired that these were, in fact, ant hills – thousands of them housing many differing varieties. They were certainly a hazard for the uninitiated.

12th-century pedigree

THE Berkeleys are the only English family in existence in England that can still trace its

ancestors from father to son back to Saxon times. Their castle is the oldest building in the country to be inhabited by the same family who built it.

Such continuity has stood this hunt in good stead. There is no other sport that can follow such lineage and still be in rude health today. To think these hounds have pedigrees that can be traced back to the 12th



Michael Stokes: in his third season carrying the horn wearing the Berkeley livery

foot follower who died 20 years ago and followed hounds for 70 years. It was positioned at the end of a ride in a perfect spot for viewing away a fox – as was his custom in time gone by.

Back in the park, hounds spoke close to the wall that was completed in 1777. The majority of the pack left through one of the 15 hound gates built into the wall. Horses squeezed out through a very narrow door and the surrounding landscape was suddenly markedly different.

A change of scene

IT was as if a green carpet had been rolled out down a slope in front of us as the vale stretched towards the Cotswold Hills. This grassland is organised into smallish fields fenced in thorn and bramble and lined with the infamous rhynes that were quite frankly bulging. With the castle at the edge of my vision it was easy to see how this March castle flooded its surrounding ground to keep out the Welsh.

Hounds feathered to the nearest hedge, pushed through and tentatively spoke to the line the other side. We set sail down

HUNT APPOINTMENTS

FOXHOUNDS

Duke of Beaufort's. – 21 Jan, Cadenham Manor, Foxham; 23, Westonbirt School; 25, Rodmarton; 27, Fox and Hounds, Acton Turville; 30, Hundred Acre Farm, Sopworth, 10.45am.

Isle of Wight. – 23 Jan, Kingsgate Equestrian, Niton; 26, Deacons Farm, Ashley; 30, Shalcombe Manor, Shalcombe, 12 noon.

BLOODHOUNDS

Farmers. – 24 Jan, Brackley Grange, Brackley; 31, Swerford Park, Swerford, 12 noon.

the bank towards the first hedge. Despite weeks of punishment from rain and wind, grass was knee high. Horses sank to the same depth. Nobody could cross this ground without thinking of the farmers. Their goodwill does not go unnoticed.

And this country boasts some of the most sporting farmers in our land. You would be well horsed to keep up with Mike Smith who, despite having just one arm, is one of the best goers here.

"He is quite simply a legend," said daughter Harriet.

Caroline Newman is a joy to watch across country. Her grey never faltered. She was always in the frame with a huge smile and a joke.

The banter was priceless. Daisy Berkeley, former British Olympic team event rider and wife of Charles, was firmly at the centre of the craic. Dan Pearce, Dan Moss and Rich Taylor had charm to burn and knew it.

The team up front never gave up and pushed on from covert to thick hedgerow to covert looking for a miracle. In patches hounds struck up and, in turn, we set sail. Some hedges grew by a foot as the going sunk at take-off. Steph Carter had trouble holding her horse – not

century when Robert Fitzhardinge completed the keep is quite overwhelming.

Heritage is all here. There was much talk of uncles, great-great-grandfathers, coats and buttons handed down from master to master and inherited hip flasks. With it came confidence, an unparalleled ease and grace across country, plus great banter.

Camilla Doyle's family has hunted here for five generations. Her distant cousin Tom carries the Lister name (as in clippers) that has featured twice in previous masterships. Tom may have only come back to hunting recently following a bet with rugby professional Mike Teague, but he certainly knew how to cross the country.

He was in good company. Charlie Blake, Nigel and Philip Hopkins (distantly related) were put to good use up front. In fact, Nigel could be glued to hounds.

Before promotion to field master, Simon Vatcher (husband of joint-master Vicky)

was part of that gang. His knowledge was invaluable; we were well placed at all times.

Despite an obvious enthusiasm, hounds really struggled to pick up any trace of the trail in the park. Michael ceaselessly cast his net far and wide in search of any semblance. We popped out into Hill Woods. Here was a plaque fixed high up on a tree in commemoration to Fred Mills, a



Members of the field give a good display over one of the Berkeley's many hedges



surprising when an X-ray the following day exposed a broken wrist.

There was a little carnage but a spongy landing soaked up the pain – maybe not the pride.

Visitors would do well to remember the quality of horse under these experienced jockeys who know their country inside out. They field four team chase teams from this hunt.

Helen Hillard has been in the mastership for 20 years. She is not the mother of multiple champion lady point-to-point jockey Polly and hunting-mad Charlie Gundry for nothing. Her horsemanship is in a league of its own; her enthusiasm and knowledge the foundation of this hunt's continuing success.

A chorus worth the wait

AT 2.45pm patience was rewarded and, my, did the tempo change. The music was wonderful and caution thrown to the wind. I started following our field master but soon changed tack. On approaching the third hedge a loose horse was galloping away and I could not see the jockey. It wasn't only because she was lying prone on the floor – but that the floor was at the bottom of a sheer green face. Looking closely at the fence my immediate thought was she was a total maniac high on adrenalin. Eventually the top of a hat was visible through the thorns and Rebecca Lingham replied in a colourful fashion

that she was OK.

With that we took our own path and followed hounds in the truest sense. I dropped down onto the team chase course and it was exhilarating as cold air caught in my throat and I worked my way to hounds across a country unknown and untried on a young horse which, as each fence passed underneath, rose to the occasion.

My abiding memory of the day, however, will be Simon Vatcher stumbling around at the base of a vast drop as his horse galloped off with Nelson Rowe in hot pursuit. He looked concussed – totally out of it – as he wobbled about, red coat flapping wide, shaking his head.

It transpired he had popped all his buttons and, as they were gold dust and entrusted to him by ex-master Buster Daniell, was desperate for their recovery. One still lies buried in the mud.

The last draw was Lobthorn beside the point-to-point course. In dimpsy light the fences seemed tiny compared to those we had tackled earlier.

Suze Tucker joked Michael would not be defeated by the light. She was right. Hounds struck up and we hunted steadily straight back to the kennel gate. You might have thought he had written the script. However, it allowed an opportunity to visit these immaculate kennels that are in the best of hands to ensure this great tradition prevails. **H&H**



Top: chairman Bob Blake with David Skinner and local farmer Mike Smith. Above: Helen Hillard MFH, Vicky Vatcher MFH, field master Simon Vatcher – minus his buttons – Nelson Rowe and Caroline Newman who is 'a joy to watch across country'. Left: farmer Dan Moss in action. Bottom: Chris Easton, hon secretary Tom Whittaker and Nigel Taylor

The field makes its way through the windswept deer park at Berkeley Castle, overlooking the swollen River Severn



IN KENNELS

Joint-masters: Helen Hillard (1995), Henry Berkeley (2000), John Evans (2009), Vicky Vatcher (2009)

Huntsman: Michael Stokes

Whipper-in: Jamie Parish

Countrymen: Ricky Coombe, Dessie Rhys, Joe Underhill

Stud groom: Sarah Meredith

The future: Felicity Grazebrook, 17; Poppy Alltimes, 17; Tahlia Coombe, 7; Abby Withers, 13; Georgia Packer, 13; Emma Aldon, 16; Freya Belcher, 15; Megan Allen, 14; Callum Hallett, 16; Lucas Lingham, 15; George Malpass, 14.

Top jockeys: Henry Berkeley, Helen Hillard, Simon and Vicky Vatcher, Mike Smith, Nigel Hopkins, Charlie Blake, Ian Cam, Philip Hopkins, Charlie Oakhill, Caroline Newman, Nelson and Massey Rowe, Richard de Courcy.

The hunt: established in the 12th century to hunt stag and buck but changed to fox in the 18th century. The fifth earl opened the season at Berkeley and moved hounds 120 miles to kennels at Cheltenham and at Broadway, Glos; Nettlebed, Oxfordshire; Gerrards Cross, Bucks; and Cranford, Middlesex. It is reported he once marked a fox to ground in Kensington Gardens. The Berkeley family still own the hounds and kennels. When country other than that around Berkeley was relinquished, the Cotswold, North Cotswold, Cotswold Vale Farmers and Old Berkeley (now forming part of the Kimblewick) hunts were established, which all retain a yellow collar, and the Kimblewick hunt staff still wear the Berkeley's tawny livery.

The country: lies in Gloucestershire and Somerset between Gloucester and Bristol. Hill country above Dursley and Wotton-under-Edge is hunted in the spring. The vale is fenced with hedges and their infamous rhynes (ditches) as well as timber.

Horses: need to be bold and have plenty of stamina.

Hound breeding: Sir John Berkeley keeps a careful eye on his son's slightly "left of field" views on choice of stallion hounds.

"I try to breed for the country so line-breed back to our blood in other kennels," explained Henry. "We nick particularly well with the Duke of Beaufort's and VWH — both of which have a lot of our old blood from Capt Ronnie Wallace's time on Exmoor."

Hunt livery: the distinctive tawny yellow outdoor Berkeley livery is worn by hunt staff and masters. It sports a green collar that has a running fox on each lapel. Ladies awarded hunt buttons wear a navy coat faced with maroon — the indoor Berkeley livery. Hunt horses have a yellow browband.



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Alice Oppenheimer and her 'outstanding' home-bred Headmore Delegate turn on the power to head the grand prix class



Delegate calls the shots

Addington Manor High Profile show, Bucks

15-17 January

By Helen Triggs

WINTER weather meant some classes were slimmed down, but there was still an abundance of talent to feast on over three full days of competition at the first High Profile show of 2016.

Established combinations and new faces stole the limelight. Alice Oppenheimer and Headmore Delegate delivered an accomplished test to claim the grand prix, silver rider Georgia Stokes scored two personal bests by winning two small tour classes and Spencer Wilton and Zamboucca dominated at inter I.

Although there were grand prix withdrawals from Carl Hester (Wanadoo), Charlotte Dujardin (Barolo), Gareth Hughes (Classic Briolinca) and Anna Ross (Die Callas), this was

still a fascinating class to watch for those spectators who braved the weather.

Alice and Headmore Delegate were the first choice of all three judges and delivered a powerful but calm and fluent test, with only two small

mistakes in the rein-back and a wrong canter strike-off after the passage. The 13-year-old Dimaggio gelding is now very established at this level and deserved his 71.77% score.

"He hasn't competed since Hickstead CDI in the summer as

he missed the nationals because of pus in the foot," explained Alice. "I hadn't pencilled in this show for him but it was an opportunity to blow away the cobwebs. I knew he'd improved in training and it's made me confident to ask for more.

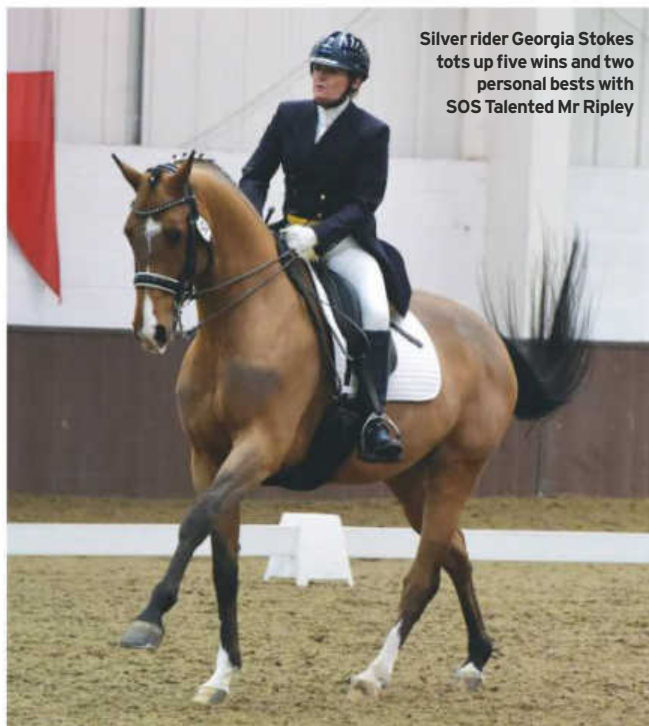
"Today he gave me some real power. He knows the tests and movements now and that is when he is at his best.

"He's a really outstanding grand prix horse."

Steph Croxford and Spencer Wilton were second and third.

Steph's Mr Hyde improved on his performance at Bury Farm High Profile in December. This time his exuberance was under control and he showed some rhythmic accuracy in the piaffe-passage tours and nailed his changes.

Spencer was third with Goodmans Supanova, a good finish to a successful show, as he won both inter I classes with Jen Goodman's Zamboucca



Silver rider Georgia Stokes tots up five wins and two personal bests with SOS Talented Mr Ripley

ONE TO WATCH

Rob Roy II

LESLEY PEYTON-GILBERT'S new ride Rob Roy II (by Rubin Royal) made a good start to his small tour career with 66% in Saturday's PSG. The eight-year-old black gelding is owned by Caroline Bridge, who bought him from Germany in November 2014.

"He's a fabulous horse with elastic paces and Caroline has done a great job with him," said Lesley. "She's tiny and he's 17.3hh. He has a lovely attitude and is very trainable."

"He's not big in terms of bravery, but he's kind and loves to interact with people," Lesley continued. "He's a long horse, so my challenge is to get him to move through his ribs. I use exercises such as renvers down the long side into travers round the short side, and plenty of leg yielding, especially before the pirouettes."



(Stedinger x Rotspan). His second inter I test was more assured than his first; Zamboucca was good in the frame and showed powerful extended paces.

"[Friday] I had an error of course and some mistakes so I was lucky to win," admitted Spencer, who has recently relocated to a yard between Maidenhead and Reading. "I enjoyed riding the second test, although there are still some points that need ironing out before the next level."

Winning streak

GEORGIA STOKES and SOS Talented Mr Ripley made the

long journey from Cornwall worthwhile with two inter I silver section wins, two prix st georges (PSG) silver wins and an overall win at PSG. The pair also achieved personal bests with scores over 71%.

Georgia bought the Nimmerdor grandson, now 10, as a yearling and originally planned to bring him on for sale.

"I fell off the other horse I'd planned to keep, so kept this one instead," explained Georgia, who was justifiably emotional about her fantastic results. "I had two lessons with Paul Hayler recently to crisp things up, and he was fantastic for my confidence."



Double medium winners Joanna Thurman-Baker and Casanova (by San Remo)

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Dual winner Nathalie Kayal scores a freestyle victory with DHI Bravo on 71.29%

Pippa Hutton won the inter II with her own and her mother Pammy's Dimaggio mare, Duela.

"She felt amazing and we are both getting more confident all the time," said Pippa, who is hoping to compete at the proposed under-25 European Championships.

Duela was 11th in the grand prix and Pippa also came 14th with Belmondo III, a horse she has sat on only six times in three months and who was doing his first grand prix test.

Friday's PSG yielded a win for Mark Mills riding David Patrick's Zazou, a 12-year-old by OOF out of a Jazz mare.

"He was an impulse buy from an advert in *H&H*," explained Mark. "He wasn't the easiest in the beginning but he's maturing really well now.

"He can be bit nervous but the more he does the more confident he becomes. He's particularly good in the extended paces – his extended walk always gets high marks."

Nathalie Kayal had a good

show with her impressive string of horses, which culminated in a PSG win on the final day with DHI Homerun and victory in the PSG freestyle with DHI Bravo.

Homerun is an 11-year-old by Hochadel and was bought when he was seven.

"He's taught me so much. He can get very stressed and nervous, mainly because he wants to do well," said Nathalie. "I started the weekend with the inter I classes as they seem to flow better for him and it set him up well for the PSG."

Dimaggio offspring rule
SUZANNE LAVANDERA'S home-bred stallion, Keystone Daganay, owned by Janet Gee, impressed at medium with a mature test to score over 75%. The eight-year-old black stallion by Dimaggio then went on to win his first ever straight advanced medium test as well.

"He's not quirky, he just does his job," enthused Suzanne. "As a youngster he was a lot of horse, but he's become easier

as he's got older. He never says no and is always on my side. He has naturally super paces – his extended trot scores nines.

"I was pleased with how he coped in the outside arena," Suzanne continued. "I only have an indoor school so I hired an outdoor one yesterday to have a practice."

Olivia Sugdon is back competing after the birth of her baby and won the advanced medium freestyle and the silver section of the medium freestyle on Cortez, a nine-year-old Sorento x Sir Sinclair gelding she's owned since a foal. Her music programme was put together by Tig Abel, the overall winner of the medium freestyle on Ro Coco.

The overnight snow did not stop proceedings in the outdoor arenas on Sunday and Chloe Hunter won medium and advanced medium classes with Daylight, her seven-year-old by Don Jovi. She works for Calum Whitworth and with his help, and that of Charlotte Dujardin, is already working at PSG level at home. **H&H**

HEARD IN THE STANDS

New-look breeches

LESLEY PEYTON-GILBERT always looks stylish riding, but it was her après-dressage attire that was turning heads. Lesley was sporting a Norwegian quilted jacket and matching skirt that was both smart and convenient. The skirt has zips front and back and leg straps, so it can be quickly converted for riding – a new fashion trend, perhaps?

On the young rider trail

FORMER junior rider Joanna Thurman-Baker won two medium silver sections with her new horse and young rider team hopeful, Casanova. Owned by Joanna and Susan Armstrong, the eight-year-old by San Remo stands at 18.3hh.

"The plan is to do Premier Leagues at small tour and hopefully go international. I'd like to do an inter II by the end of the summer," said Joanna.



Spencer Wilton takes two inter Is with Zamboucca (Stedinger x Rotsporn)

RESULTS

15 Jan: med 75Q gold (J Gillett). – 1, Keystone Daganay (S Lavandera) 75.41; 2, Cambridge (H Bates) 73.38; 3, Dancer Khan (H Cheetham) 72.57. silv. – 1, Casanova (J Thurman-Baker) 71.89; 2, Classic DeeJay (Clare Porz) 67.16; 3, Cortez (O Sugdon) 66.35. brnz. – 1, Toledo De Kerker (T McEwen) 65.81; 2, SOS Kantjes Unicolor (P Padley) 63.51. adv med 98Q gold (A Nicell). – 1, Keystone Daganay 72.37; 2, El Zorro (M Hicks) 72.24; 3, Don Dante (O Cooper) 70. silv. – 1, Cortez 65.39; 2, Diamond Jack (N Hodge) 64.87; 3, Show Boy (H Bailey) 64.74. brnz. – 1, Toledo De Kerker 62.24. PSG gold (P Bushell, J McGarel Groves, J Head). – 1, Zazou (M Mills) 69.25; 2, Blitz (J Harvey) 69.17; 3, DHI Bravo (N Kayal) 68.64. silv. – 1, Aramis T (D Coakley) 66.27; 2, SOS Talented Mr Ripley (G Stokes) 66.27; 3, Vigo (J Mutch) 66.01. inter I gold (J Peberdy, P Storr, J Robinson). – 1, Zamboucca (S Wilton) 70.75; 2, DHI Homerun (N Kayal) 69.21; 3, Lou Wega (F Brennan) 68.82. silv. – 1, SOS Talented Mr Ripley 67.59; 2, Divine Inspiration (H Payne)

65.48; 3, Furisan (K Humphrey) 64.04. inter II (L Whetstone, I Wessels, D Trott). – 1, Duela (P Hutton) 68.55; 2, Ferrera (J Siu) 68.42; 3, Air F.k (D Sherriff) 68.07. 16 Jan: PSG gold (C Inchcape, L Whetstone, C Gardiner). – 1, Zante (G Lucas) 69.74; 2, Alert V (H Payne) 69.69; 3, Zazou 69.61. silv. – 1, SOS Talented Mr Ripley 71.01; 2, Chamiro Van De Kampert (E Woolley) 68.64; 3, Wrangler (J Chubb) 68.07. med 73Q gold (G Leverett). – 1, Dancer Khan 71.76; 2, Galdiamond Cintillation (F Brennan) 67.79; 3, Korenbloem Thunder (F Brennan) 65.44. silv. – 1, Mount St John Best Of All (L Elliott) 68.09; 2, Classic DeeJay 67.35; 3, Enjoy K (D Harvey) 65. adv med 92Q gold (P Storr). – 1, Wiepke II (V Jones) 73.24; 2, Ottone (M Doran) 70; 3, Sabatini (C Dicker) 69.46. silv. – 1, Armstrong II (L Spencer) 65.68; 2, Valentino XVIII (M Latimer Smith) 64.19; 3, Caesar Hansbjerg (M Daley) 63.87. brnz. – 1, Toledo De Kerker 66.22; 2, Keystone Dimaggio (I Sheridan) 63.92; 3, Enjoy K 62.3. inter I gold (M Robins, S Pidgeley, D Wardle). – 1, Zamboucca 75; 2, DHI Work Of Art (M Chapman) 71.14; 3, Davonport Bewes

(C Moir) 70.04. silv. – 1, SOS Talented Mr Ripley 71.27; Belaggio (A Redshaw) 67.41; 3, Divine Inspiration (H Payne) 66.05. FEI pony team (J Head, J McGarel Groves). – 1, Helliggenbergs Pushed Again (A Johansson) 67.37; 2, Rober (E Bond) 66.41; 3, Bks Grand Design (C McDowall) 66.22. FEI jnr team (W Fitness, N Burton). – 1, Uvender V (A Hellings) 70.47; 2, Aquiro (A Jesty) 69.73; 3, Waranos (R Bell) 67.23. FEI YR team (J Robinson, A Wessels). – 1, Mr Mercury (A Schiessl) 66.45; 2, Sir Charlie Chaplin (L Hewitt) 65.79; 3, Winnetou GEP (R Hole) 64.61. GP (C Landolt, S Phillips, P Storr). – 1, Headmore Delegate (A Oppenheimer) 71.77; 2, Mr Hyde (S Croxford) 69.53; 3, Goodmans Supernova (S Wilton) 69.17. 17 Jan: PSG gold (G Leverett, S McMahon, P Lang). – 1, DHI Homerun (N Kayal) 71.93; 2, Special (T Reeve-Smith) 69.65; 3, Salo (G Lucas) 69.52. silv. – 1, SOS Talented Mr Ripley 69.17; 2, Ruby Rubin (J Chubb) 67.89; 3, Belaggio 67.63. adv med 98Q gold (W Filtiness). – 1, Riverndell Royal Jazz (C Stansfield) 66.18; 2, Kiara II (M Posner) 63.68. silv. – 1, Daylight (C Hunter) 67.89; 2, Parisienne Jupiter (A

Gladding) 65.79; 3, Diamond Jack (N Hodge) 65.13. brnz. – 1, Utopico (G Porter-Rawlings) 62.5. med 75Q gold (A Nicell). – 1, Daylight 70.27; 2, Parisienne Jupiter 69.46; 3, Djarak (L Farrer) 67.43. silv. – 1, Casanova 68.38; 2, Encore III (C Jackson) 66.49; 3, Saffron XII (S Ward) 63.78. pony ind (J Harvey). – 1, Doctor Little (H Kerslake) 68.9; 2, Hesseiteich's Desert Rose (P Kearns) 67.66; 3, Little Byrom Patchwork (J Sanderson) 67.32. jnr ind (H Payne). – 1, Sabatini (C Dicker) 70.39; 2, Florentino (R Hugh Smith) 68.68; 3, Aquiro 66.71. yr indiv. (J Harvey). – 1, Hot Chocolate (L Phillips) 66.71. med FSM Q gold (J Head, J Firminston-Williams). – 1, Rocco (C Abel) 73.67; 2, Armstrong II 68.92; 3, Primiende (C Dawson) 63.58. silv. – 1, Cortez (O Sugdon) 69.75; 2, Zandokan (C Szweczyk) 69.33; 3, Foxcourt Accola (J Turney) 69.25. adv med FSM Q (J Gillett, J Robinson). – 1, Cortez 74; 2, Sabatini 73.58; 3, Remarkable (E Bradshaw) 69.24. PSG FSM Q (J Robinson, J Ward, P Bushell). – 1, DHI Bravo (N Kayal) 71.29; 2, Lou Wega (F Brennan) & Christoph Himself (J Palmer) 71.17.

Outstanding Results



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SOUTH-EAST

Elegant Elgar hits the right notes

A group one rider shows off a hot new prospect, while teenagers excel and a square trotter overcomes challenges to become a winner in our weekly round-up

SUSSEX-based rider Daniel Timson has started the year by giving hot prospect Elgar some quiet show mileage, writes *Celia Cadwallader*. The eight-year-old 17.2hh Florencio II x Ehrentusch gelding has all the talent to become an international flagship competition horse for his breeders, the Ormonde Stud.

At **Belmoredean**, West Sussex (7 January), Elgar delivered a 70.17% medium win by "just cruising around".

"I wasn't asking anything of him today," said Daniel. "My objective, from the moment I get on to the moment I get off, is to have control of everything underneath me."

"The medium 61 serves my purpose better than the



SOUTH-EAST: Daniel Timson is excited about Elgar's prospects, as he cruises to a plus-70% medium win with the Florencio II eight-year-old

qualifier tests with their more taxing movements, like walk pirouettes. You don't need distractions or tension causing problems. If a horse begins to associate tension with a movement, he could carry that experience into the future."

Olympian Kirsty Mepham put the first points on Hickstead international five-year-old

finalist Amicella's card, winning the elementary qualifier.

"She hasn't been out for six months so I was pleased with her attitude," said Kirsty.

"Everything felt easy for her; she just needed to take a breath. The 10-metre canter circle, medium canter and canter half-circle sequence in the elementary 53 show off her

ability to shorten, lengthen and come back again.

"We'll just do a couple more elementary trips and then bring her out at medium."

Owner Mandy Crouch, who found the Ampere x First Final mare through Craig Rawlins, said: "My aim is to compete her in young horse prix st georges (PSG) classes next year."

SCOTLAND

Barry's on track for a step up

THE weather continues to challenge riders in Scotland with flooding and heavy snow curtailing many competitors' travel plans and preventing some from reaching **Morris EC**, Ayrshire (8-10 January), writes *Melanie Scott*.

Jo Barry (née Hamilton) topped the PSG freestyle with 76.88% on Corchapin. Their music was compiled by Tom Hunt for Jo's other horse Vivaldi when he was competing at the same level.

Corchapin, known as Colin at home, is a nine-year-old by Negro. He is co-owned with Lady Hope and is part of the

World Class equine pathway programme.

"Colin and I have been concentrating on the advanced work recently, to establish the pirouettes and tempi changes and encourage him to take more weight behind. We are also working on his piaffe and passage," explained Jo, a Horsescotland performance squad member.

"I'm aiming for some Premier Leagues this year at small tour, and I hope to do some inter Is later in the year."

The pair were sixth at the national championships and Jo added that she is planning

some choreography changes to be made prior to the advanced medium and PSG freestyle regionals.

New British Dressage (BD) member Emma Ware had two bronze wins at prelim and novice with Dries Van De Nachtegaale, a 13-year-old Belgian warmblood who is a grandson of Heartbreaker.

"He had done mostly hacking before I got him. He's quiet and that attracted me as I can get really nervous," said Emma, 19, who fits competing around working at Ailsa View livery yard and riding stables that she runs with her mother, Patricia.



SCOTLAND: Jo Barry (née Hamilton) and Corchapin score a PSG freestyle victory with just a shade under 77%



NORTH: Helen Lancaster and the Santano gelding Socrates Hit, whom Helen bought unbacked while viewing another horse, claim an elementary qualifier

NORTH

On Show enjoys the spotlight

JOLYSE BELL-SYER rode her own and her mother Alyse's home-bred eventing mare On Show to win the elementary 42 qualifier at **Northallerton EC**, North Yorks (10 January), writes *Jo Prestwich*. The Cabri D'Elle 10-year-old is out of the Wendekreis mare On Song.

"She's over 17hh and has taken time to find her balance," said Jolyse, who trains with Chris Bartle. "She's not a great fan of dressage warm-ups but always shows off in an arena and as that was her first outing since Osberton CC12* last year I'm delighted. The aim this year is Bramham.

"We'd like to try embryo transfer with her, although the biggest problem with that is choosing a stallion – I'm obsessed with Royaldik but my mother prefers Lux Z."

Amy Roberts scored a prelim one-two with Waterloo IV and Indian Springs. Amy is also an eventing recruit and this was only her second affiliated dressage show.

"I started off competing in working hunter classes and then bought Waterloo to hunt with the Badsworth and Bramham Moor," said Amy, who runs her own yard. "He had evented previously so I decided to give it a go and got hooked."

Helen Lancaster won an elementary qualifier by the

narrowest margin riding Socrates Hit, with collectives determining the win. Helen bought the Santano gelding as an unbacked four-year-old.

"I went to see another horse and Socrates was in the next door box," she said. "I loved his conformation and personality, and bought him instead."

SOUTH-WEST

Kaissando's destined for tails

ALISA HUNTER GORDON'S sights are firmly set on buying her first set of tails after winning at advanced medium on her 15-year-old Kaissandro at **Kingston Maurward**, Dorset (10 January), writes *Annabel Kerby*.

"Having two lessons a week has made a big difference, and ironically I was able to have them because I was having treatment for breast cancer. Liz Guy was brilliant and would help me in the morning, before my treatment in the

IOWE IT TO...

A Renault Clio

SAM BUTTERY puts her medium qualifier win with Cool Hand Luke at **Northallerton EC** firmly at the door of her old Renault Clio.

"I saw Luke advertised as a two-year-old, went to see him and loved him," she explained. "I couldn't actually afford him at the time but when I got home I put the car on the market and decided that if it sold I was meant to buy the horse!"

The car did indeed sell the following morning and Sam duly bought the horse. This win was the combination's first attempt at a medium.

"I planned to event him but jumping's not his thing so we tried dressage," added Sam, who trains with Caroline Saynor. "Never in a million years did I think we'd get this far – he surprises me every day!"



afternoon," said Alisa.

"The scarring still hurts a bit when I'm riding and so Liz makes sure I'm not tempted to adjust my position. Now I'm aiming to come out at PSG as soon as possible."

Samantha Willson, 14, and the home-bred Delhurens Sunshine, by Deanes San Ciro Hit, headed two novice tests.

"I took over the ride from my mum, Jackie, at the beginning of December and this one is hugely different from my other horse, who is a cob," said Samantha.

"Luckily we have lights in our school and so I ride at 6am twice a week and otherwise after school."

Lucy Baker braved the wind and hail to win two novices at **Badgworth Arena**, Somerset (9 January), on her six-year-old

Ifya Like, who was bred by her aunt, Dawn Saunders.

"He was more terrified about the sound of the rain on the roof of the lorry than he was outside. He was happy to be in the indoor arena and despite only a five-minute warm-up, he never put a foot wrong," said Lucy.

CENTRAL

Young pair bag big score

MADDY WHELAN, 12, earned the highest score of the day when topping elementary 57 with 73.57% at **Quainton Stud**, Bucks (9 January), reports *Stephanie Bateman*.

She has owned five-year-old gelding Beaurepaire Frodo, by Littledale Bright Star, for a year.

"The weather was appalling but he really kept his head for a young pony," said Maddy's mother, Lorna. "We don't get him out very often but he seems to gain big scores and he's already qualified for the regionals."

Maddy trains with Jackie Beaven and hopes to compete "Freddie" in British Young Riders Dressage Scheme (BYRDS) competitions.

Vicky Carty and Julie Oram's nine-year-old Irish sport horse Rockstar Rio took both prelims with plus-70%.

Vicky started riding Rio after he'd had an operation for



SOUTH-WEST: advanced medium victors Alisa Hunter Gordon and Kaissandro are aiming for PSG



CENTRAL: Maddy Whelan, 12, gets to grips with the five-year-old Beaupaire Frodo, the pair posting plus-73% at elementary ahead of the regionals

kissing spines two years ago. "We did a year of unaffiliated dressage and this was our first affiliated competition," said Vicky, who trains with Sarah Hawkins. "Rio still remembers pain in canter, so we've been doing lots of shallow loops and transitions to relax him."

Francesca Swallow, 16, took a well-deserved break from studying to compete her eventer at his first affiliated dressage competition. They won both novices at **Solihull RC**, West Mids (7 January).

Cyres, an eight-year-old gelding by Nassau, events at one-star with Sarah Parkes.

"I had him home for the Christmas holidays because I'm hoping to take over the ride once I've done my A-levels," Francesca said. "He was going so nicely that I decided to take him to Solihull and he didn't put a foot wrong."

WALES & WEST

Sunshine's a hot prospect

HEATHER CUMMING strengthened her bond with new ride Sunshine V by winning both elementary and medium qualifiers at **Summerhouse EC**, Glos (8 January), writes **Andrea Oakes**.

"She's super – the nicest I've ridden for a long time," said Heather, who teamed up with Linda Penfold's Hannoverian mare just before Christmas and describes her as "a Ferrari".

"I'm still feeling my way with her and I was quite cautious in a couple of places, so there's more to come."

"A couple of lessons with my trainer Trish Gardiner have made a massive difference to our partnership," added Heather. "Sunshine can be sharp, but she's a very bright mare, so Trish has encouraged me to ride her positively but with sensitivity."

Stephen Rees took both novices with Ursula 19, the Holstein event mare he is handing to his wife Claire to compete.

"I've been suffering with a bad back and she's a big-moving mare," explained Stephen, who drives an HGV lorry for a living. "Ursula has done well in both disciplines but we feel that she's more of a dressage horse, so we're setting out down that route with her."

The advanced mediums went to Anna Ross' high-spirited Hochadel gelding Altogether Endeavour, previously ridden by Amy Francis but now competed by Beth Bainbridge.

"He can be exuberant and you never quite know when your seatbelt sign is going to come on," said Beth. "But he's a nice guy and I'm so excited about him. He's starting to

feel like the horse he's going to be in the future."

SOUTH

Ducon rises above the weather

FAY LAI'S Ducon demonstrated new maturity to produce two plus-70% winning mediums at **Crofton Manor**, Hants (9 January), despite very challenging weather conditions, reports **Helen Triggs**.

"I've had him for three-and-a-half years and he's been extra sharp and a bit opinionated, so I was delighted with his performance. It's nice that he's started to toe the line," said Fay, who trains the eight-year-old Scandic gelding with help from Nicola Buchanan.

Beth Bainbridge also worked hard here, with four horses to compete. She scored the day's top mark of 74.42% in prelim 17 on Denise Fryer's Serano Gold mare, Keystone Starstruck.

"'Sparky' is a rising five-year-old and Crofton was just her second show."

"She's really nice – forward with big paces," commented Beth. "Hopefully Denise will do young horse classes and qualify her for the regionals."

Caroline Hall's six-year-old Breittling W son, Southern Cross Braemar, had two plus-71% scores with a novice win and a second in the silver qualifier. He was ridden by eventer Dannie Morgan, who trains with Anna Ross and David Stone.

"'Barry' also jumps well but he makes dressage feel easy," said Dannie. "I'd like to train him on in dressage as I think he's got the qualities to go all the way."

Marie Kent won two medium classes on Deborah Fisher's Zinedine Zidane (Zen) at

East Soley, Berks (10 January). Marie has had the ride on the 12-year-old Faringdon gelding for three years, riding him twice a week with Deborah working him in between.

"It was his first time out for three months and he felt a bit green in the first test and then found his feet in the second. He's taken a long time to mature and physically cope with the questions we ask of him," said Marie.

NORTH-WEST

Greenwood finds her Mojo

AMY GREENWOOD rode the striking Micklewood Mojo to win the medium 73 at **Rodbaston Equine**, Staffs (9 January), reports **Jo Prestwich**. It was the perfect return to competition, this being his first outing in just under two years.

"I've been so busy that he hasn't been out," said Amy, who fits in her riding round a full-time job.

"He did well in showing and won at the Coloured Horse and Pony Society (CHAPS) championships before we decided to have a go at dressage."

Myerscough Arena, Lancs (10-11 January), proved popular with competitors looking for an outing at the venue of the upcoming winter regionals.

For Julie Frizzell, a nine-hour round trip from South Lincs proved well worth the effort with wins in the gold elementary 59 and the para grade IV novice qualifier, riding DCUK Crazy Diamond. The former event horse is now 19 but show no signs of retiring.

"I concentrate on gymnastic exercises when I work him and he feels better than ever," said Julie. "He's defying all logic as he's getting better with age, but he's the most unlikely para horse ever – he was a lunatic in his younger days and was just as likely to nap back to the boxes as start, but he's been brilliant for me. I just wish I'd had a bet with Ladbrokes – the odds on him doing this would have been massive!"

The grade II went to Jane Lishman and her Londonderry mare Lordana TG. The mare



SOUTH: 'He's started to toe the line' – the Scandic gelding Ducon tops two mediums under Fay Lai

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NORTH-WEST: Former showing star Micklewood Mojo belies a lack of match practice to win at medium for Amy Greenwood – his first outing in two years

hasn't been out for a couple of months and her test had a couple of exuberant moments.

"She did a nought to 60 at the end of the turn on the haunches but the rest felt good," said Jane, who trains with Gwyneth Lewis.

EAST

Star performance from Wright

TRACY WRIGHT and Kermo's Dinaro Star posted a personal best of almost 75% at inter I in the pick-your-own at Wix EC, Essex (10 January), writes *Selene Scarsi*.

"Not only was it a personal best at the level but we also got our first 10, for his medium trot, which was the icing on the cake," said Tracy, who, together with her husband John Lowrie, has owned the now 12-year-old Danish warmblood by Don Frederico since he was three, training him up to his present level with the help of

coach Char Lassetter.

"'Dings' has matured really well and is working at his best at this level. Hopefully we will compete in our first grand prix soon," continued the rider, who has this year taken over the role as BD's Eastern region coaching rep.



EAST: Kermo's Dinaro Star's inter I medium trot earns Tracy Wright their first 10

RESULTS

MORRIS EC

Ayrshire, 8-10 January
Prelim 14 brnz (F Baker). – 1, Eran Of Croila (L Paisley) 71.04; 2, Balroy De Brugere (M Buchanan) 63.75; 3, Thunder III (K Gordon) 62.5. **prelim 19Q gold (C Paterson).** – 1, Brynfa Razzel Dazzel (L Cochrane) 63.86. **silv.** – 1, Mocha In The Morning (J Gillespie) 62.5. **brnz.** – 1, Thunder III 69.55; 2, Eran Of Croila 68.86; 3, Really Rosie (H Rayson) 61.36. **nov 28 gold (K Ogilvie).** – 1, First Miss Sunrise AS (K Young) 80.83. **silv.** – 1, Devon B (F Strykowski) 76.25; 2, Vandal (J Petty) 68.54; 3, Borthwicks Wingman (S Hutchison) 62.08. **brnz.** – 1, Really Rosie 53.33. **nov 37Q gold (C Paterson).** – 1, First Miss Sunrise AS 74.46. **silv.** – 1, Devon B 65.54; 2, Vandal 64.82; 3, Borthwicks Wingman 63.21. **brnz.** – 1, Hollis Rainbow (L Hutton) 67.14; 2, Millfield Suntan (J Morrison) 64.29. **elem 44 silv (F Baker).** – 1, Uffo (A Duff) 61.6. **brnz.** – 1, Joldert Fan Offenwier (K Murray) 66.6; 2, Lintavon Stormbird (G White) 61.8. **elem 53Q gold (P Beattie).** – 1, Eranda Relto (E Grant) 74.41; 2, Rubensdale (L Littlejohn) 71.62. **silv.** – 1, Uffo 61.91. **brnz.** – 1, Botton Juniper (P Peterkin) 66.76; 2, Joldert Fan Offenwier 64.71; 3,

Aroy (S McKay) 61.91. **med 73Q gold.** – 1, Eranda Relto 67.5. **brnz.** – 1, Rubensdale 60.59; 2, Enagh Topflight (K Jackson) 59.56. **adv med 98Q silv.** – 1, Comanche Crumble (L Matheson) 69.08. **brnz.** – 1, Enagh Topflight 58.16. **prelim 13 brnz (F Baker).** – 1, Dries Van De Nachtegaale (E Ware) 68.13; 2, Machno Diamante (A Macarthur) 66.46. **nov 34 silv (K Ogilvie).** – 1, Devon B 72.71. **brnz.** – 1, Dries Van De Nachtegaale 63.96; 2, Really Rosie 52.69. **elem 50 brnz (P Beattie).** – 1, Joldert Fan Offenwier 69.46; 2, Lintavon Stormbird 64.29. **med 71 silv.** – 1, Uspardie (K Dewar) 70.32. **brnz.** – 1, Enagh Topflight 64.19. **nov FSM Q silv (L Barnes).** – 1, Devon B 73.33; 2, GHS Trinity (A Duff) 63.33. **elem FSM Q gold.** – 1, Eranda Relto 82.12. **silv.** – 1, Joldert Fan Offenwier 69.42; 2, Dramatiste (S Reid) 64.81; 3, GHS Trinity 60. **med FSMQ silv (P Beattie).** – 1, Uspardie 71.5. **adv med FSMQ gold.** – 1, Comanche Crumble 73. **PSG FSM Q gold.** – 1, Corchapin (J Barry) 76.88.

STEP ASIDE

West Sussex, 7 January

Prelim 15 silv (C Stothard). – 1, Jimmy Bond (G Browne) 64.13. **prelim 19Q silv.** – 1, Jimmy Bond 67.27; 2, Donnie Darko (P Doolan) 65. **nov 22 gold (P Hayward).** – 1,

At Houghton Hall, Cambs (6 January), Antonia Brown posted the highest score of the day with over 77% at prelim, riding the five-year-old Gasparo M, by Climax, a recent purchase from Melissa Chapman.

"I fell in love with him when I went up to see another horse at Melissa's Catterick yard. He hasn't been backed for long, but has the most amazing quality in all three of his paces, with an unbelievable walk," commented Antonia.

"He is forward-thinking and brave with plenty of power. I have really high hopes for him, both in the young horse classes and to train up the levels.

"I would love to quietly produce him for the future with the help of Dan Greenwood," concluded the rider, who is hoping to find a part-owner or syndicate so she can keep the horse. **H&H**

AGAINST THE ODDS

'I went round and round until she learnt to canter'

JAYNE MONEY'S Rodbaston medium winner Patchwork Princess is an unlikely candidate for dressage, being a pure-bred square trotter.

"She was spotted by my other half, Phil," said Jayne. "He'd been shoeing her and she hadn't made the grade as a trotter but he thought she had the potential to make a great child's pony. She was about 14hh when I bought her but grew to 15.1hh and I ended up keeping her."

Initially the mare evented but was so careful that Jayne decided dressage would suit her better.

"The biggest problem was sorting the canter," she said. "I can't tell you how long I spent going round and round the field until she learnt what I meant.

"She used to go so fast to get into the canter and then I'd have the bizarre feeling of her slowing right down when she actually did. Then she'd break and fly off in trot and we'd start again.

"I did a good bit without a saddle as she has no wither, and it took ages to find a saddle that would fit. She isn't the most talented in terms of movement but she has most tremendous zest for life and we have so much fun," concluded Jayne.

Nov FSM Q silv (J Howard). – 1, Bonus (S Parlour) 65.55; 2, Africa II (J Shearer) 65. **elem FSM Q gold.** – 1, Victor IV (C Shrimpton-Wicks) 71.73. **silv.** – 1, City Slicker (J Hyde) 69.42; 2, Finjo (L Fisher) 66.53. **med FSM Q gold.** – 1, Diamond Sun II (T Atkins) 70.33. **silv.** – 1, Decorum (J Penwarden) 70.33; 2, Solloway Black Jack (F Gordon-Clark) 66.33. **med 61.** – 1, Shiraz II (S Gualtieri) 72.75; 2, Sir Bastien (E Bird) 68.27. **silv.** – 1, Showgirl (D Lloyd) 66.37; 2, Decorum 64.31; 3, Ego Star (D Johnston) 63.27. **brnz.** – 1, Valentin III (A Pease) 66.03. **med 73Q gold.** – 1, Shiraz II 70.73; 2, Sir Bastien 66.17. **silv.** – 1, Nibeley Euphoria (S Babb) 63.38; 2, Showgirl 61.17. **brnz.** – 1, Z Vivaldo (V Tyrrell) 70.29; 2, Valentin III 61.91. **adv med 85 gold (A Darken).** – 1, Tigger Too (B Martin) 66.17; 2, Iramee (J Frost) 64.26. **silv.** – 1, Midnight Cassini (J Frost) 66.02; 2, Hechicero LIX (G Deed) 64.41. **adv med 98Q gold.** – 1, Eduardo (S Turner) 72.5; 2, Tigger Too 65.26. **silv.** – 1, Midnight Cassini 65.78; 2, Hechicero LIX 65. **adv 100.** – 1, Eduardo 67.18; 2, Runworth High Society (S Saward) 60.78. **PYO gold.** – 1, Sandro's Dancer (S Gualtieri) 72.23; 2, Lora (M Dowman) 60.52. **silv.** – 1, Kermo's Dinaro Star (T Wright) 74.73; 2, Bon Ami II (G Hyland) 69.07. **adv med FSM Q.** – 1, Bon Ami II 70.33; 2, Fabia Bee (H Theobald) 63.33.

WIX EC

Essex, 10 January

COMMENT

Paul Fielder



A year to improve ourselves

IT is much harder to stay at the top of your sport, now this is the year to prove ourselves and achieve more goals. We don't plan to fail, we just fail to plan.

I am working with professional riders in Norway and Sweden and we are already busy implementing their autumn plan. By now, some are set on a goal for the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo. So much of our riding revolves around this four-yearly event — it's what dreams are made of.

I can remember clearly one of the most memorable moments of my career, training Norwegian rider Siril Helljesen and the mare Dorina. We were in the outdoor school at our home here in Norfolk and our

local church rang the bells, calling all the athletes to London for the Games. It was a special moment and the hairs stood up on the back of my neck.

I am sure our riders and trainers will have such experiences this coming year, and we wish them all good luck. I hope they will take the time to savour those moments.

For the horses, this is an important time for building strength in all their work, especially for the core muscles. Our sport is so much about expression and a real international way of going. We work on cross-training to develop and create impulsion, suppleness and agility; this helps the horse to become a body mover, not just a leg mover. It is also good for the rider to fine-tune their reactions and quickness needed for competing at top level.

European stallion shows

At this moment much work is being done to prepare stallions abroad for the major shows and I am helping Peter van de Sande and his stallion Guardian S, who is by the British-based stallion Cyden Bodyguard Moorland.

They live in Holland and will be heading off to the final KWPN stallion grading at 'S-Hertogenbosch in February.

Many of the young horses are now under saddle, so the breaking in and long-reining has been done and exciting times are to come as we see them develop under the rider.

Trainers find it harder to access top quality stock at affordable prices, yet without good horses we will not be able to go forward in the sport. I think we should be more particular in selecting young horses and spend more time going with their nature and not trying to change it.

Here in this country there is so much to learn from the strength and vast knowledge of our top riders and trainers, so I hope we get to see our Olympic riders performing and giving demonstrations prior to leaving for the Games — this is very inspirational for the lower-level riders and gives back so much to the sport.

A change of scene

LIFESTYLE changes are about to be upon us, as we are downsizing and relocating to Lincolnshire. This will give us time to enjoy and compete our own horses, especially having the superb facilities of Sheepgate Equestrian on our doorstep. My foreign riders will also use Sheepgate as their UK base. Life is too short — it's time to enjoy it! **H&H**

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Scott Brash puts in a deceptively quick round on Hello Forever to take first and second (Hello Annie) in the grand prix

Forever pips Annie in battle of Hellos

Bury Farm Senior Premier Show, Bucks

14-17 January

By Penny Richardson

SCOTT BRASH'S decision to come to Bury Farm with two horses for two classes paid off handsomely when he finished first and second in the grand prix. The world number one also raised the temperature on the Saturday evening when freezing temperatures and heavy overnight snow caused the cancellation of the final day.

David Cole's grand prix course struck exactly the right balance. It wasn't a gut-buster, but demanded concentration and care, particularly on the long curving run to a big final oxer that caused the downfall of otherwise perfect rounds from Helen Tredwell (Sebastian VII) and Ben Walker (Cacharel Z). Holly Gillott also looked unlucky



B&C winner Adrian Whiteway on Anytime II. He was also second with Carambow

to finish on four faults after Quality Old Joker stroked a pole off in the combination.

Four pairs got everything right and Scott, with Hello Forever and Hello Annie, was joined in the jump-off by the oh-so-consistent combination of Kerry Brennan and Wellington M, and Phillip Miller on Shirley Light's brilliant Unbelievable Lady, at her first

show after a holiday.

The winning round came from first draw after Scott produced one of his trademark performances where he doesn't appear to be going fast, but is actually very quick indeed. A fresh Hello Forever gave the fences plenty of air and never looked like faulting to set an unmatchable standard.

"I might have to miss out a

fence and hope no one notices," joked Phillip, who was next to go.

He set off fast and wasn't far off the time, but two poles down left him in eventual fourth.

Kerry Brennan's intentions were clear when she wound up Wellington M before the start, but it was all over when the little gelding faulted at the first. With victory already secured, Scott then went for second place with Hello Annie, who produced another superb clear.

This was Scott's first visit to Bury Farm.

"The facilities are great and the courses were very good indeed. The horses and I have enjoyed it," he said.

Scott had two reasons for coming to the Buckinghamshire centre.

"I wanted to try new bits with both of them in competition and also they've been doing all their jumping at five-star shows, which is very tough on horses,"



Edited by

Hannah Lemieux

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DO YOU HAVE A SHOWJUMPING STORY?
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BURY FARM

he explained. "They haven't been to a show since Olympia and I wanted to give them a pleasant experience at a level below that. It's worked out perfectly, so I'm very pleased. I'm off to Spain for a fortnight and our next outing will be the World Cup show in Bordeaux."

Scott didn't make a clean sweep, as he and Hello Forever had to settle for second in Thursday's major class behind an inspired Julie Andrews on Ayrton IV. It was an exciting jump-off where just over a second separated the top six.

"I'm dead chuffed. I gave Ayrton a break after Horse of the Year Show and it's taken us a while to get going again, but he's been fantastic here, bless him," said Julie. "I didn't see Scott's round and I wasn't really going all out to win, but it was one of those classes where everything went right."

Julie and Ayrton were back again the following day with another brilliant performance to win a second class. This time, they held off the challenge from two young guns from the same stable, as Alfie Bradstock was close behind on KBIS Caicos and Will Fletcher rode Unique IX into third spot.

Julie's triumphs continued in the 1.30m section as she won both classes on Canora, who made it five victories in five classes here since Julie regained the ride last year. However, the ups and downs of the sport were illustrated when a fall from another horse in the winter 1.25m qualifier left Julie



Max Routledge heads to the Spanish sunshine tour on top form, as Chanel IV wins the winter grade C

with an ankle injury and she had to pull out of the grand prix.

The winner of the 1.25m class was Zoe Adams, who jumped a flying round on her long-time partner Satonamillion.

"He's 14 now and he's done a lot in his life, from eventing to grand prix showjumping. He's started to feel as though he might be struggling over really big combinations, so I thought I'd let him have fun over a smaller track," explained Zoe.

Whiteway times it right

ADRIAN WHITEWAY'S trip from his base, which is next-door to the now-defunct Hand Equestrian Centre near Bristol, paid off handsomely when he captured both tickets to the

Royal International Horse Show (RIHS) in a hard-fought winter B&C qualifier.

Sixty hopefuls took on a tough first round track and just 12 reached the jump-off, where it took top-class performances from Adrian on Anytime II and Carambow to hold off the challenge from 19-year-old Georgia Lovett, who was riding Westend Gunner.

Adrian, who won the winter novice final at last year's RIHS, could not have been more pleased with his horses.

"I've been riding Anytime since early last year, but I've just bought him, so this was my first show as owner-rider," he said. "He's a really cool horse."

Adrian used to event and Carambow was bought for Adrian by owner Hazel Stowell as a potential eventer, but proved too careful.

"He has his own way of doing things, but he's a real trier," assessed Adrian.

International event rider Gemma Tattersall is equally effective over coloured poles and enjoyed a show that culminated in wins in Saturday's newcomers and Foxhunter classes with the mares Chillis Gem and Santiago Bay.

"I've had a great time," said the Sussex rider. "I've been getting them ready for the eventing season and they've been quite wild at home, so three days' jumping has been good for them."

Max Routledge was another on-form rider, adding the top spot in the winter grade C qualifier on Chanel IV to two Foxhunter wins with another seven-year-old, Castletara Lady Lux.

"I gave them a long break after Addington's young horse show and this is only their second show back. We're going to the Spanish sunshine tour in a fortnight, so it couldn't have gone better," he said. **H&H**



Having fun: Zoe Adams and Satonamillion turn on the speed to head the winter 1.25m

RESULTS

14 Jan: Connolly's Red Mills newcomers.— 1 & 3, Edamora & Fleur (B Walker); 2, Mari Eve (A Winterburn). **1.15m.**— 1, Fe Mi Amor (C White); 2, Cadence Dreamer (A Jones); 3, For Fun VI (J Popely). **H&H Foxhunter.**— 1, Castletara Lady Lux (M Routledge); 2, Elvis V (H Brougham); 3, Romany (B Vernon). **1.20m.**— 1, Corphin (S Breen); 2, On Your Marks (J Chipperfield); 3, Tropicque (G Tattersall). **1.30m.**— 1, Canora (J Andrews); 2, Darona (P Miller); 3, Weston (R Moss). **1.40m.**— 1, Ayrton IV (J Andrews); 2, Hello Forever (S Brash); 3, Loughnatousa WB (T Breen). **15 Jan: Connolly's Red Mills newcomers.**— 1, Dera B (L Warren); 2, Chillis Gem (G Tattersall); 3, Moneybroom Dancer (B Vernon). **H&H Foxhunter/grade C.**— 1, Castletara Lady Lux; 2 & 3, Brazoria De Semilly & Edamora

(B Walker). **winter grade C.**— 1, Chanel IV (M Routledge); 2, Della H (E Elliott); 3, Conzalez M (L Thompson). **1.30m.**— 1, Canora; 2, Fiona VH Lemmenshof (L Pavitt); 3, Weston. **1.40m.**— 1, Ayrton IV; 2, KBIS Caicos (A Bradstock); 3, Unique IX (W Fletcher). **16 Jan: Connolly's Red Mills newcomers.**— 1, Chillis Gem; 2, KHP Rio (C Dunphy); 3, Caluca 2 (J Crippen). **H&H Foxhunter.**— 1, Santiago Bay (G Tattersall); 2, Zeusland (C Nicol); 3, Ballyknock Fountain Boy (H Gillott). **1.20m.**— 1, KBIS Bruce Almighty (A Bradstock); 2, Tiara Mail (J Crippen); 3, Altaira (S Goding). **winter B&C.**— 1 & 2, Anytime II & Carambow (A Whiteway); 3, Westend Gunner (G Lovett). **Halsall Electrical winter 1.25m.**— 1, Satonamillion (Z Adams); 2, La Stampa Z (B Walker); 3, Bentley V (M Potter). **GP.**— 1 & 2, Hello Forever & Hello Annie (S Brash); 3, Wellington M (K Brennan).

Mark Turnbull's inexperienced home-bred mare, Corina X, steps up to the challenge to win the SEIB winter novice qualifier



Turnbull ups the ante

SNEC, West Lothian

16–17 January

By Mark McGowan

CAREFUL deliberation and a last-minute change of tactics for Mark Turnbull proved key to his success in the SEIB winter novice qualifier, when he delivered the winning formula riding his eight-year-old home-bred Corina X.

With 21 very capable combinations progressing to the timed round and course-designer Diane Beaumont leaving several time-saving options on offer, there was no margin for error.

"Up until today Corina has never been asked to go against the clock," said Mark, "but the only way we stood any chance was to set a challenge from the

outset. She was only broken at the end of 2014 and has been steadily collecting double clears without too much pressure being applied, but she coped with the demands of today very easily."

Having spent the past few years breaking and riding for various owners, the Fife-based rider is now taking a temporary step back to concentrate on his own rides.

"I'm probably playing catch up with a few of them, including Corina, but the prospect of finally competing her in the final at Hickstead is really exciting. I've been third so many times in the qualifiers and on one occasion couldn't make it to the final, but I'm determined this year is definitely the one," added Mark.

Stephen Lohar's decision to

miss a day on the slopes paid off as he took second with Janet and William Keith's Dandy Man MFS.

"It was a choice between going skiing or coming to a show and I'm glad that I made the effort," he said.

Bought as a foal by the owners, the eight-year-old gelding was formerly competed in the showing arena. He was sent to Stephen's St Andrews yard to be sold and some impressive performances recently at 1.30m, as well as here, have now slightly altered future plans.

"I wouldn't have normally considered going to Hickstead with one horse, but since my girlfriend Lucy Guild has qualified for the winter B&C it will now make it more of a trip. He'll definitely thrive in the main arena there," added Stephen.

Last drawn Greg Taylor admitted to underestimating the pace of the top two as he finished third with Esunja.

"In hindsight a stride less to the second fence and last fence would have done it, but I can't criticise the mare at all, she did everything that was asked of her," he said.

Exceeding expectations

ALEX MCHATTIE got her first full year in horses off to a flying start, taking the top two spots in the winter amateur qualifier with Rhodanites Rowenberry and Sonata.

With the benefit of the first and last draw in the five-strong jump-off, the Cumbrian rider took full advantage of the forward stride of her eventual winner to set an unassailable lead.



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"Rowenberry is very fiery and always wants to take me to the fence," said Alex, 16.

"Sonata is a bit more laid-back in her approach, but both really suit my style and give me tremendous confidence no matter what they tackle."

The rider admitted that both horses have exceeded her expectations at this early stage.

"It was by chance that the owners were at a local show in Cumbria when I was competing and they offered me both of them to ride. It has been a fantastic opportunity and I haven't looked back since," she said.

Alex is currently undertaking an apprenticeship in equine management, and hopes to follow a career path training and producing young horses.

After a lengthy absence from the showjumping arena, Jennifer Thomson was soon back in the limelight, taking third with Tawnmore Lux Furious.

The Fife rider has now found time to devote to her riding passion, having concentrated on her career as a newly qualified vet for the past three years.

"Since graduating I have been working in mixed animal practice to build my experience," said Jennifer.

"The pressures of that and on-call commitments meant I



Douglas Duffin and new ride, Colgravin H, take the 1.30m spoils having already bagged the previous 1.20m class

had no time for horses at all, but a recent change means I have a little more flexibility."

Jennifer carefully chose the nine-year-old mare, formerly ridden by Aileen Craig, due to her still being in Grade C.

"It was important for me that I had something I could still jump comfortably around some novice and amateur classes as spare time is still very much at a premium. I might have to be at the yard every day at 6.30am to ride and muck out before I

start work, but days like this make it all worth the effort," she added.

Success for new combo

A hard-fought 1.30m resulted in four combinations attempting to lay claim to the £450 prize-fund. The spoils went to Douglas Duffin, with a well-deserved victory aboard his ride of only four months, Kirk Ritchie's Colgravin H.

The pair also claimed the previous 1.20m class, and

Douglas explained that the eight-year-old, formerly ridden by Lauren Edwards, has only recently stepped up to this level.

"When I got her she was still in newcomers, but she has loads of ability and it became apparent that she had loads more to give without having to try too hard," he said.

"She will stay at this level in preparation for the newcomer and Foxhunter second rounds in the summer." **H&H**



Alex McHattie pulls off a brilliant one-two in the winter amateur qualifier with Rhodanites Rowenberry (above) and Sonata

RESULTS

16 Jan: 1.15m.—1, Abadan (H Pedrosa); 2, Jalisco (N Robertson); 3, Rhodanites Rowenberry (A McHattie). **BS winter amateur q.**—1, Rhodanites Rowenberry; 2, Sonata (A McHattie); 3, Tawnmore Lux Furious (J Thomson). **H&H Foxhunter/1.20m.**—1, Don Adelheid Z (V Wight); 2, Buddaire (J Raeside); 3, Tawnmore Lux Furious. **Brit nov.**—1, Cooley Offshore (K Kay); Clonakilty Rose (C McIntyre); 3, Miss Ars Vivendi (P Guthrie). **90cm.**—1, Hurricane Annie (P Guthrie); 2, Quari VH Rampelhof Z (L Hebdon). **discovery.**—1, Dutch N Go (C Johnstone); 2, Biendorado (D Irvine); 3, Papillion H (J Raeside). **1m.**—1, Copper V (A Blackwood); 2, Renkum Jack Dane (M Thompson). **1.05m.**—1, Dutch N Go; 2, Apricot Sunshine (L Whitfield); 3, Rehy Volunteer (D Edward). **newcomers/1.10m.**—1, Zula Maeva (L Frisby); 2, Conдор III (S Currie); 3, Enceladus (L Montgomerie). **discovery.**—1, Frauke De Bonheur (C Hamilton); 2, Tinnakill Delboy (K Aird); 3, Antrim October (R Williamson). **17 Jan: 1m.**—1, Morning Flight (C Caldwell); 2, Hawthorn Flight Path (K Brook); 3, Ally D (E Bayliss-Hollamby). **1.05m.**—1, Morning Flight; 2, Anky (A Gatherum); 3, Sooky Toory (N McArthur). **SEIB winter novice.**—1, Corina X (M Turnbull); 2, Dandy Man MFS (S Lohoor); 3, Esunja (G Taylor). **newcomers/1.10m.**—1, Ochil Star (A Deighton); 2, Dandy Man MFS; 3, Clerania (S Hutt). **1.15m members cup.**—1, Gabor (A Gatherum); 2, Touch Of Class III (L McKenzie); 3, Sparco (V Hewson). **H&H Foxhunter/1.20m.**—1, Colgravin H (D Duffin); 2, Indy IV (A Black); 3, Ashton Duchess (M Turnbull). **1.30m.**—1, Colgravin H; 2, Zidane X (L Hutt); 3, Indy IV.

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**South View 148cm
Pony Premier
Wettenhall, Cheshire**
16-17 January
By Margaret Shaw

AFTER winning both Charles Stanley winter JA classic qualifiers, Jack Whitaker and Elando Van De Roshoeve look serious contenders to challenge for top honours in the summer championship to be hosted at South View at the Charles Stanley British Masters.

Just four months into his partnership with the Rebus G stallion, Jack produced one immaculate clear after another, six in all.

"He's so straightforward and laid-back; you would never know he's a stallion," said Jack.

"I've never ridden a pony with so much jump; he can turn up or gallop to a fence and jump anything you ask him to."

In his first outings with "Lando", Jack gained places at Bishop Burton and Addington before finishing fifth in the grand prix at Millstreet.

After spending time in the field on a winter break while Jack competed on horses, Lando has quickly settled back into his stride.

While Mark McGowan set flowing courses for the opening qualifiers, a day later they were more technical and demanding, but it made little difference to the double winners.

"Lando is easily controlled with just a snaffle," continued Jack. "He's so adjustable and responsive and even when he spooked a bit and I lost a stirrup halfway round the first jump-off on the first day, he never faltered."

Three made it through to the second jump-off on the opening day and with his Masters ticket secure, Jack led the way to set an unbeatable target.

Emma Crawford and Moonlight Flight produced the only other triple clear to claim the next ticket.

After gaining places at the British Showjumping national and Scope championships, Flight is another pony who enjoyed a winter break.

"This is his first show back and he's flying. He knows his job and loves the surface here,



Just four months into their partnership, Jack Whitaker and Elando Van De Roshoeve produce six clears to claim double winter JA classic qualifier triumph

A Whitaker whitewash

and, as we always seem to do well over Mark's courses, we were on a mission to jump a triple clear," said Emma, who also finished fifth riding Stars Surprise.

"Flight isn't big and some of the top rails were up to his ears, but he's strong into his fences and I know he'll jump them when he gets there," she added.

Jodie Hall-McAteer took the final ticket in the opening qualifier riding her 2015 Scope Dungleigh championship winner Lea Du Genier.

The Hertfordshire rider claimed two further places with The Little Squire (fourth) and Cevin III (seventh).

Three more JA tickets were up for grabs the following day when four contested the final – Jack and Lando again won with a masterful round from last draw.

Robert Murphy and Rainbows Mocha produced the only other triple clear to finish second. The pair won the pony showjumper

of the year title at Horse of the Year Show (HOYS) in October and they were also placed in the winter JC final at Hickstead last July.

"We were clear and had four faults yesterday, so as this course asked a lot more questions I concentrated on making sure she felt confident, and she jumped well in all three rounds," said Robert.

Snapping up tickets

DESPITE having her very first ride in this series, Antonia Platt secured her ticket riding third-placed Carnhill Luna who nudged the front rail off the final oxer.

"I think I was a little bit far off it, but I didn't expect to qualify on our first outing at this level," said Antonia, who is only a few months into her partnership with Luna.

As his winning ride had qualified the previous day, Jack Whitaker secured a second ticket with fourth-placed

Zodianne Van De Doeveenbree.

Lottie Tutt dominated the opening winter JC qualifier, the 14-year-old rider claiming two Hickstead tickets riding Colours Of Romeo and Jim Bob II, who finished first and third.

Colours Of Romeo has proved very consistent in big championships.

The nine-year-old mare finished seventh in the 2015 JC final and she was also placed in the 2014 and 2015 newcomer championships at HOYS.

Nine contested the final round, where Lottie cruised into the lead at the halfway stage.

"The courses were nice and flowing and as she normally covers a lot of ground there was no need to push her along," said Lottie.

Third-placed Jim Bob was also a finalist in the 2015 winter JC championship, the nine-year-old having finished fourth at Hickstead.

"Jim Bob's quite sharp when he gets in the ring, but

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DANTE DRESSAGE SADDLE





Madison Jamison and Sweepstake slot into second in a winter JC qualifier

he soon settles into a rhythm," said Lottie.

Madison Jamison and Sweepstake separated Lottie's two rides to secure her Hickstead ticket.

"This is his first class at this level and even the first round course looked big to me, so to finish on a triple clear is a real achievement," said Madison.

After partying at the Scottish Branch British Showjumping Ball, where he received the indoor JA and South East pony championship courtesy of his 2015 winter JC champion Bay Friend, Fraser Reed had double

cause for celebration when Jiminy Cricket won the second JC qualifier.

Over the past year, Fraser has carefully produced the pony from novice to JA.

"We did the Christmas show here as a preparation for the second rounds and, while he was a bit fresh yesterday, the further he went over this track the better he jumped.

"I thought a triple clear would be enough to qualify, but we kept moving just in case," said Fraser.

Robert Murphy claimed the final Hickstead ticket of the weekend, riding John Carpenter's second-placed Opto-Mist.

"He has come on a lot over the past few months. He's very careful, has a better technique in the air and is quicker into his stride now," said Robert. **H&H**

RESULTS

16 Jan: pony newcomers. – 1, Langstaffe Dazzling (G Burchmore-Eames); 2, Dyffryntan Intrepid (I McKinlay); 3, Roan De Goariva (L Tutt). **1.0m.** – 1, International Playboy (G Taylor-Jones); 2, Lennon Princess (S McLean); 3, Atlantic Hill (J Fernyhough). **JC/JA.** – 1, Little Miss Mayhem (M Bennett); 2, Atlantic Hill; 3, Spot The Go Jo (I McKinlay). **Charles Stanley JA Classic.** – 1, Elando Van De Roshoeve (J Whitaker); 2, Moonlight Flight (E Crawford); 3, Lea Du Genier (J Hall-McAteer). **winter JC qualifier.** – 1 & 3, Colours Of Romeo & Jim Bob II (L Tutt); 2, Sweepstake (M Jamison). **Horsequest UK Coral.** – 1, Lackaghmore Avatar (K McNamara); 2, Roan De Goariva; 3, Braveheart VI (A Atkinson). **Blue Chip Pro Sparkle JC/JA.** – 1, Rich Faith (F Roberts); 2, Allihies Fir Baol (C Walsman); 3, Cragghouse Floyd (E Jolliffe). **17 Jan: newcomers.** – 1, Dyffryntan Intrepid; 2, Roan De Goariva; 3, Atomic Du Barry (A Clutterbuck). **1.0m.** – 1, Ronja III (B Otley); 2, Lennon Princess; 3, Kilcurry Dawn (S Kullich). **JC/JA.** – 1, Bonds Glen (G Taylor-Jones); 2, Konzales Van Orchids (L Freeman-Attwood); 3, Spot The Go Jo. **winter JC qualifier.** – 1, Jiminy Cricket (F Reed); 2, Opto-Mist (R Murphy); 3, Adams Fancy (E Hammond). **Charles Stanley JA Classic.** – 1, Elando Van De Roshoeve; 2, Rainbows Mocha (R Murphy); 3, Carnhill Luna (A Platt). **Squibb Group Foxhunter/1.10m.** – 1, Sweepstake; 2, Lynncot Corey B (A Clark); 3, Powerstation (R Murphy). **BS 148cm special.** – 1, International Playboy (G Taylor-Jones); 2, Nelly Kid (T Byrnt); 3, Ron Burgundy (G Burchmore-Eames).



'Some of the top rails were up to his ears': Emma Crawford and Moonlight Flight are runners-up in the JA Classic

Lynch's luck of the Irish



Denis Lynch and All Star 5 take second in the Longines FEI World Cup qualifier

Leipzig CSI5*, Germany
14-17 January

IRELAND'S Denis Lynch settled for the runner-up spot behind German youngster Niklas Krieg during the ninth leg of the Longines FEI World Cup qualifier, in Leipzig.

Partnering his 12-year-old mare Carella 5, the 22-year-old German was making his debut in the World Cup jumping series and came home with a three-second advantage over the Irishman around the Frank Rothenberger-designed track – despite a last-minute change of plan.

"I talked with my father before I went in and we decided I should go around fence 12, but then the first two fences came up really nicely and I thought to myself, 'no risk, no fun', so I just went for it," said Niklas.

"I wanted to try to win but not to overdo things. Altogether

this was fantastic and three days after my birthday – I have given myself the best present."

Denis put in a commendable challenge aboard the 13-year-old All Star 5. The pair were one of just three combinations to leave the poles up in the final round, the other being third-placed Harrie Smolders and Don VHP Z.

"We've been very unlucky, in Madrid we had one down and again in Mechelen, but today luck was on our side and I'm very happy with that," said Denis.

"The jump-off was definitely quite tricky. All Star is not the quickest but very consistent."

Both Ireland's Bertram Allen and British star Jessica Mendoza (Spirit T) had their hopes dashed when two poles each bit the dust – they finished 12th and 13th respectively. Frustratingly for Bertram, he and Molly Malone V set a quick time of 38.69 seconds. **H&H**

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HOOF CARE

Britain's leading rider continues to hold the world number one spot, a US trainer heads to Brazil and Sultan V is back in the swing of things



Scott Brash starts his year as the world number one for the third consecutive time

Scott still on top

SCOTT BRASH saw in 2016 the same way he waved goodbye to 2015 — as world number one. It is the third year in a row the Scotsman has opened his campaign heading the Longines FEI world rankings.

French rider Simon Delestre is the new runner-up in the rankings list, having moved up two positions since December, while the USA's Kent Farrington occupies third and top US lady rider Beezie Madden is fourth.

Bertram Allen is now ranked seventh, but the young Irish star is currently topping group A of the FEI Olympic athletes list — for riders from a nation not qualified for Rio — with Molly Malone V (1,131 points). In group B Italian Emanuele Gaudiano is the highest ranked rider with his Olympia World Cup qualifier-winning mount Admara 2 (1,245 points).

Riders who top these groups on 6 March will gain a place for their nation in Rio.

Olympic home side welcome new trainer

RENOWNED US trainer George H Morris is to coach the Olympic home side, taking up the role with the Brazilian Equestrian Federation. He will be part of a committee to form and train Brazil's team — he will be their trainer and not their chef d'équipe.

"We are happy with the new hiring of Mr Morris and are sure that his ability and expertise will greatly help our riders in this final stretch towards achievements at the Olympic Games in Rio," said the federation's president Luiz Roberto Giugni.

George, who as a rider won team silver at the 1960 Rome Olympics, was chef d'équipe

for the US team for eight years until 2013. He said it will be a "positive thing" to do.

Para riders to benefit from training

A para showjumping training weekend, organised by mentor and former international showjumper Dame Emma Jane Brown, will take place at Arena UK, Lincs, on 29-31 January.

Trainers including Alison Bradley, Michael Jones and Adrian Marsh will deliver a weekend of lessons and competition, with seminars hosted by Emma, who has pledged to help 18 para riders via training, sponsorship and competitions during the year.

"There is a need to support these riders, some of whom

have the ability to represent the UK," said Emma.

"I hope to make a difference, starting at Arena UK, where owner Norman Oley has grasped the need to go the extra mile for them.

"He is providing the riders with free stabling, food and accommodation."

Lynch's top ride retired

DENIS LYNCH'S long-term ride Abbervail Van Het Dingshof has been retired from showjumping following the 16-year-old's triumph at Basel CSI5* in early January.

The son of Nonstop has enjoyed great success under the Irish rider over the years, including numerous grands prix wins. They also jumped in the 2011 and 2012 World Cup finals. **H&H**

Sultan's back

THE popular grey showjumper Sultan V enjoyed his first outing since being reunited with his former rider Bruce Menzies. The 14-year-old gelding moved to the Saudi Arabian team ahead of the London 2012 Olympics — where he won team bronze under Abdullah al Sharbatly — but returned to West Sussex-based Bruce in July last year.

"He's in good shape; I hired out the jumps at Parwood Equestrian Centre and popped him over 1.10m," said Bruce. "It was his first proper jump in nearly two years [since overcoming injury]. He really enjoyed it and was bucking around the arena. He feels great in himself.

"Everyone keeps asking when they will see him back out again and hopefully it will be at Addington at the end of January."



Sultan V has returned to competition since being reunited with Bruce Menzies

New coach for Italy

DUTCH trainer Henk Nooren has taken on coaching some of Italy's top riders including Emanuele Gaudiano, Lorenzo de Luca and Piergiorgio Bucci, as the countdown to the Rio Olympics begins — although he will not be holding the title of chef d'équipe for the Italian team. Having previously trained the Swedish, French and Dutch teams, Henk will be filling the gap left by former Italian chef d'équipe Hans Horn, while Roberto Arioldi will be the official team manager.

COMMENT

Peter
Charles



‘Tarred with the same brush’

THE FEI's rules and regulations for our sport are often made behind closed doors and without much rider consultation. Bans become imposed, red tape is introduced, and by the time it's happened, it's too late to do anything about it retrospectively.

Was it with this lack of sensible consultation of showjumpers that the “blood rule” — which states that any bleeding from the flanks, mouth or nose, or marks indicating excessive use of spurs will result in mandatory disqualification — was imposed?

Without doubt nobody wants to see riders digging holes in horses' sides, causing unnecessary suffering. But surely the most common-sense solution is to re-examine the rule that's in place? If a rider — such as Bertram Allen — accidentally nicks their horse during the show, they should be given a verbal warning for their action. Upon a second violation, they should be automatically banned from that show. I'm sure this is an approach with which many top riders will agree.

I was also pleased to hear a rumour that one of the current rules recently put in place in Switzerland — the banning of draw reins in the warm-up and prize-giving at national shows (news, 14 January) — is unlikely to be enforced internationally.

In discussing the use of draw reins, you cannot compare dressage training with showjumping. We warm up and prepare differently and we expect different things from our horses. I'd like to see a dressage rider warming up with 20 others in a small collecting ring. When they are warming up, you can't even open a bag of crisps.

If I have a young, spooky or nervous horse, I will sometimes use draw reins in the warm-up. They keep a horse in a better

shape, help maintain their confidence and stop them from spinning and running away. It's not about over-bending or bullying them; in professional hands they are a sensible aid for education.

A separate voice

IN a positive move, there was discussion with the British team manager Di Lampard at Liverpool regarding the reintroduction of the British Riders Club. Through the club we can have a suitable voice independent from the British Showjumping lobby, and air our concerns and beliefs on how the sport should progress.

One issue I raised with Di concerned the number of British riders invited to compete at major shows in the UK. It costs a rider approximately £10,000 to take part in the two-star classes at the London Global Champions Tour — if not invited by the show. Pay-cards are being reviewed by the FEI, however if this practice is allowed to continue across the board, it's a disaster for up-and-coming riders.

Our top riders should be given 12 places, with a further 12 reserved for young riders or our county show riders — they work hard to earn a living and are the lifeblood of the sport.

I have seen how difficult it is for the younger generation to get opportunities to jump at bigger shows. If we're to have a future, we must invest in one.

Nina Barbour and her team showcased everything that was good about our country during Liverpool International, but especially the young riders, which was one of the best classes all week. Horse of the Year Show decided to omit it from their schedule — to me, one of the daftest decisions they've ever made. **H&H**

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RACING

Russe Blanc delivers Classic success



The great white hope: Russe Blanc – the only registered white horse in training – seals the Betfred Classic with a faultless round of jumping

Warwick

16–17 January

By Marcus Armytage

KERRY LEE'S dream start to her training career continued at Warwick on Saturday when, for the second weekend in a row, she won the big televised staying chase. This time the Betfred Classic with Russe Blanc – whose major claim to fame before this gutsy performance was as the only registered white horse in training.

The nine-year-old, who had won the bumper on the same card five years previously, had just missed the cut for the previous weekend's Welsh National, which Lee won with Mountainous. As a mud-loving, sound-jumping stayer he would appear to have all the attributes for a serious crack at the 2016 Welsh National in December.

After this success, Lee was interviewed by Nick Luck rather than her brother, presenter Tom, otherwise *Channel 4 Racing* would have been in danger of becoming the *Tom and Kerry Show*, but whatever Lee is doing at the moment, it seems to be working. This was the third Saturday in a row she had sent out a decent winner, with Bishops Road, starting the ball rolling at Sandown in a handicap chase on 2 January.

"I've always wanted to train so I'm really happy, the staff are very happy and the horses are happy and it all starts from there," she said.

She later added that she felt a little fraudulent for taking all the credit after her parents had taken years to build up the yard to its current level.

On a day when the vast majority of winners made the running, Charlie Poste, who rode the Lees' first Welsh National winner Le Beau Bai in 2011, held up the leggy, athletic white in the middle. He is a superb jumper and that as much as his stamina, hitherto untried at the 3m 5f trip, won him the day.

Four of the 14 runners – including the previous winner of this race, Rigadin De Beauchene, and the favourite, Sego Success – were fallers, and two others unseated.

But Russe Blanc never made a semblance of a mistake, jumping to the front six out, and when joined by Midnight Prayer off the bend, and headed for a moment at the second last, it was yet another fine leap and quick getaway from the last that sealed a 3¾-length win. The only other three finishers came in a 10-minute interval.

The single moment of worry for Poste, riding on a postage stamp of a saddle, was going to three out when Russe Blanc



New trainer Kerry Lee celebrates her third big televised success this month

Pictures by Bill Selwyn and racingfotos.com



Coneygree's front-running half-brother Flintham (right) fights hard to repel the challenge of Pobbles Bay in the Pertemps Network Handicap Hurdle Qualifier

briefly looked to follow a loose horse round the fence. There was a slight wobble as the saddle briefly slipped sideways but Poste was comfortably able to right it.

He brushed off the incident, saying: "He jumped brilliantly; he's always been a great jumper. They've given him a lot of time and it's bearing fruit now. Once he'd nicked a length at the last I knew that I wouldn't be beaten."

Lee added: "Dad spotted him at the sales as a three-year-old. He bought the horse very cheaply [8,000gns at Doncaster Bloodstock Sales, see box, right]. Anyone can ride him at home.

"He was a good price at 20-1 as much as anything because the trainer is good at managing 'expectations'! He won a bumper here on heavy ground and he's best on softer ground, which goes against what some commentators say. Every time he sees a fence he picks up. He loves his jumping.

"Turning in I was wishing there were four fences in the straight not two. He wouldn't get into the Grand National on his present rating but we'll see. It was his first time at the trip



Flintham's connections – the Rasher Partnership and jockey Nico de Boinville

so hopefully there might be some progression."

Oaksey dynasty lives on

WITHOUT the Gold Cup winner Coneygree, albeit only for the rest of the season, and with his half-brother, the 2011 Hennessy winner Carruthers, heading off to Larkhill this weekend to try his hand at point-to-pointing, the family honour is resting on their youngest brother Flintham's shoulders.

However, the last of the brothers – he was orphaned at birth and is something of a runt in comparison – showed the family trait of never-say-die

tenacity and brilliant jumping as he carried top weight to a resilient victory in Saturday's Pertemps Network Handicap Hurdle Qualifier.

Having made all the running, jumping for fun for Nico de Boinville, he was briefly headed at the last by Pobbles Bay, but he was in absolutely no mood for surrender and pulled out more to win by three quarters of a length.

The Bradstocks have nicknames for everything at Letcombe Bassett. Coneygree is known as Max and owned by the Max Partnership, and Flintham is known as Rasher

THE OWNER...

...of Russe Blanc

FOR years Mark Jackson was a producer for Channel 4 Racing before moving to Inverness.

"Richard [Lee] bought him for £8,000 so it shows it can still be done," explained Mark. "Lord knows what the handicapper will do with him now but they'll look at races like the Eider Chase and Midlands and Irish Grand Nationals I guess. He's from the family of Cache Fleur – winner of the 1995 Whitbread Gold Cup – and Noland, the 2006 Supreme Hurdle winner. His full brother runs over a mile on the Flat."

and owned by the Rasher Partnership, which consists of many of the Coneygree gang.

He got the name Rasher because, as the last foal from Plaid Maid, Sara Bradstock thought he would save their bacon – although Coneygree did that pretty effectively when he won the Gold Cup last March. In actual fact it was Flintham who, in birth, killed the goose that was laying the golden eggs.

Brought up by a foster mum, ▶

COMMENT

Richard Johnson



Mud and Mountainous

JANUARY is always a reasonably quiet month and the weather has been so bad that quite a few meetings have been cancelled, which is frustrating.

It was great that Chepstow's Welsh Grand National went ahead on 9 January, and it's thanks to the British Horseracing Authority and the racecourse that we are able to reschedule these big races.

It was quite a slog, a real test and there was nowhere to hide. You could barely recognise the jockeys when they came back they were so covered in mud.

We've said it before but it is nice to see the older horses winning. Mountainous won the race two years ago, so to regain the title was fantastic to see.

It was also good for trainer Kerry Lee, who has just taken over the licence from her father, Richard, in Herefordshire. For

her to have the Welsh National winner, plus a winner with Bishops Road at Sandown (2 January) and the Warwick Classic Chase winner, Russe Blanc, last weekend (16 January) — all within her first few months — is an achievement. It's a real family effort and I've ridden plenty of winners for her father, so it's great to see.

Reaching a landmark

I was thrilled to reach 3,000 winners under National Hunt Rules (see news, p7, Richard is the only jump jockey aside from AP McCoy to reach this figure).

It was a slight surprise — I'd hoped I would reach that number this year but I didn't realise I was quite that close until the press highlighted it the night before.

It seems a long time ago since I had my first winner, Rusty Bridge, back in 1994, trained by my granddad. If you had asked me then if I thought I would ever reach 3,000 I'd have said you were mad.

It's fantastic but it's all down to other people really: Dave Roberts my agent for securing me rides, and trainers such as David Nicholson and Philip Hobbs. I've been lucky to have massive support.

Philip's horses are in good form at the moment. Champagne West and Fingal Bay should be out in the next couple of weeks and are ones to watch out for.

Balthazar King, who is such a popular character, is in wonderful order and is still

full steam ahead for the cross-country race at the Cheltenham Festival. He has fully recovered from his fall at Aintree last season and is back schooling at home.

When the weather improves we'll take him for a spin at a cross-country course to let him enjoy a play over all the different fences he might find at Cheltenham. He'll be more than ready come March; he's an enthusiastic type and is loving life.

Whip rules are working

AFTER the King George VI there was some backlash regarding overuse of the whip, when both Paddy Brennan on the winner Cue Card and Ruby Walsh on runner-up Vautour picked up bans and fines (news, 14 January).

There has been the urge from some to try and change the rules (see letters, p14), but I think, on the whole, they work. Jockeys are taking well to the current rules, which were beefed up in 2011, and always do their best, so it was good to hear the news that whip offences were down 9% last year on 2014 (see news, p8).

It's always going to be hard with the same rules for a 2m hurdle on fast ground and a 4m chase on heavy, but jockeys have worked hard to adhere to them.

I don't think jockeys go for the whip now unless they really need it, and as we're not breaking the rules as much I think it puts riders in a better light. **H&H**

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QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"SHE'S going to think training horses is easy"

Richard Lee after Russe Blanc continued his daughter Kerry's good run

Rasher has several issues. It may be a small man's syndrome but he feels the best way to assert his authority is to take out the opposition by kicking them. At home he will even run backwards to kick another horse innocently minding its own business, and at the start of a race de Boinville, who gets on with the whole family like a house on fire, has to keep him away from the other runners.

But like Coneygree and Carruthers he stays and has a tenacious desire to win and jump, which is why his chasing debut at Exeter, when he was too deliberate, so surprised the trainer. Though he led for a long way on his next outing at Cheltenham, when ridden by a claimer, he did not set a fast enough pace nor make the most of his jumping, and he was caught flat-footed when it turned into a sprint.

At Warwick though he always had the others at a stretch, as he continually gained a length at his hurdles.

"They are an extraordinary family," said Bradstock. "They



Black beauty: Black Hercules gives a jumping masterclass en route to victory in the Betfred Mobile Hampton Novices' Chase

give you everything. He actually ran a good race at Cheltenham but it turned into a sprint and he's not a sprinter. The plan was to come here and get qualified and he's done that."

He had news of Coneygree, who is recovering from a hock problem and, having finished his box rest, is now being led out. He will be ridden again in about a week's time.

The Mullins juggernaut

WILLIE MULLINS said he would start bringing a few horses over at the weekends to find suitable races for them before the

Cheltenham Festival, and he was good to his word on Saturday when three came over.

Though the gorgeous Black Hercules may yet get the vote from Ruby Walsh in the RSA Chase after a masterclass in jumping to beat Definitely Red 2¾ lengths in the Betfred Mobile Hampton Novices' Chase, what was really ominous was the Mullins pair Thomas Hobson and Open Eagle fighting out the finish of the Grade Two Neptune Investment Management Novices' Hurdle.

Neither horse is anywhere near the Mullins A squad of

novice hurdlers, nor possibly the B squad, and yet they kicked some smart British horses into touch. It would be a brave man to bet against Mullins improving on the record tally of eight winners, which he set at last year's Festival, given the firepower he has at home.

Added to that, of the most likely sources to provide any sort of home resistance Paul Nicholls does not appear to have much and Nicky Henderson is not running many while the ground is so soft.

Black Hercules really caught the eye though and it is no wonder Patrick Mullins was angling for the ride in the National Hunt Chase. He is an Irish-bred, by Heron Island; a long-striding, old-fashioned type of horse who came up through pointing and is clearly not as precocious as the French-bred horses that fill the Mullins yard.

Given that this was only his second outing over fences under Rules, he put in a very professional round of jumping and, for a big horse, still managed to gain ground when getting in close to one, as he most notably did at the last. After that, Danny Mullins will surely also be putting in for the ride at Cheltenham – and I'll be queuing up for him as a hunter when Graham Wylie's done with him. **H&H**

RIDE OF THE WEEK

Ruby Walsh

THE jockey's recovery on Killultagh Vic when the horse over-jumped at the last in the Coral.ie Novice Chase at Leopardstown was one thing – getting back up to win without pedals was quite another.



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Impressive: Carlton Ryan and William Easterby (number 4) gradually make up ground to triumph in the Conditions race (division two), having been 20 lengths behind



YORKSHIRE AREA POINT-TO-POINT CLUB

Easterby enjoys a double

An agriculture student scoops two wins, Palypso De Creek thrashes the opposition and Shantou Prince completes a hat-trick at Sheriff Hutton (17 January). **Peter Burgon** reports



Shantou Prince scores his third win from three starts for John Furness

A Newcastle University agriculture student had a day to remember with two winners and three placings from six rides. William Easterby's double was initiated by Carlton Ryan in the second division of the Yorkshire Area Point-to-Point (YAPP) Club Members Riders Conditions Race.

After looking as though he was chasing a lost cause when still 20 lengths behind

Fearthedark three out, the eight-year-old gradually pegged back the tiring leader before assuming control halfway up the run-in.

"This is the first time I've ridden Carlton Ryan and I was impressed," said 21-year-old William. "I thought I might have given him too much to do but he responded well and galloped all the way to the line."

Greensalt completed William's double in the open maiden. The eight-year-old, owned and trained by William's mother, Sarah, stayed on to score by two lengths.

Sarah said of the former Donald McCain-trained gelding: "We were delighted with his first run for us when he was just beaten by Catchamat at Alnwick [in December] as we weren't sure whether he'd stay three miles. He's improved again here and looks a nice prospect."

Palypso De Creek took his career tally to 27 – including 12 under Rules – with an impressive seasonal debut in the ladies' open. Never out of second gear, the 13-year-old led four out and forged clear of Railway Dillon (Emma Todd) by 12 lengths.

"That's 21 races I've won on him now," said jockey Claire Hart. "He needs a bit of winding up at times, but he never gave me an anxious moment. He runs next in a Wetherby Hunters' Chase on 6 February."

Shantou Prince made it three from three since being bought privately in Ireland last year by John Furness.

Delivered with a perfectly timed challenge by John's son, Christy, the seven-year-old gelding headed Mattara (Abbie McCain) approaching the last and quickened up nicely to take the YAPP Members Riders Conditions Race

(division one) by a length.

Christy, 25, is a London-based trainee stockbroker and travels home every weekend to hunt with the Bedale.

FIRST WIN

Gray Wolf River

THIS five-year-old by Fair Mix gave 22-year-old Robert Hogg his first winner between the flags in the 2½-mile open maiden at Sheriff Hutton.

Owned and trained by vet Neil Mechie, the youngster forged clear from the last to beat Freddy Coole (William Easterby) by six lengths.

"She changed gear as soon as I gave her a squeeze after jumping two out," said Penrith-born Robert, who is attached to Sue Smith's Bingley yard. "It's great to finally get a pointing success."

SILVERTON

Delphi Mountain surges ahead

Heavy going leads to exciting finishes at Black Forest Lodge (17 January)

DELPHI MOUNTAIN made light work of testing soft conditions to head the confined after scooting clear of Pasternak Jack (Heidi Lewis) to win by 15 lengths, writes Lizzie Luxton.

"We were boxed in at the first, but after that he travelled well and it felt easy," said jockey Emma Watson, who also trains this good-looking 11-year-old by Oscar.

Both opens provided great battles, with Horsham Lad (Josephine Banks) surging home to pip Coombe Hill (Millie Wonnacott) in the ladies.

The men's open was taken by Sir Du Bearn (Richard Patrick), who made the long journey from the Vale of Clettwr in Wales worthwhile for owner/trainer Mickey Bowen.

"He's run in hunter chases before but he wasn't enjoying it. He loves pointing, though, and we may find a chase for him later in the season," said Mickey.

The restricted went the way of Robin De Souza, a six-year-old by Robin Des Pres ridden by H&H columnist Darren Edwards.

The gelding took up the running at the open ditch on the final circuit and, with plenty of others still in contention, went on to score by four lengths from previous course and distance winner Northgeorge (Byron Moorcroft).

The horse is trained by Dean Summersby for Tony and Eileen Worth.

"It was a big test in today's ground," said Dean, "but he stayed on well."

By the time the first of three open maiden divisions started, rain had made the ground on the heavy side.

Zephyr, ridden by 18-year-old pony graduate Chester Williams, triumphed in division one.

"Zephyr was bought to go



'It felt easy': Emma Watson and Delphi Mountain make light of the conditions

summer racing, but he's had a hard time and is enjoying some pointing. With luck he will provide Chester with the three rides that he requires before applying for his B licence," said Chester's mother, Jane Williams.

Creative Inerta (Ben Clarke) got the better of a tired Whatastormnorm (Tom Chanin) in division two, where only two from 11 starters finished.

Will Biddick piloted Bruton, owned and trained by Fiona Read, to victory in the third.

"Bruton's dam, Hops And Pops, was a useful mare and Bruton has taken time to mature. First time out he was too keen and didn't complete, so today is his first finish," said Fiona of her home-bred.

Intermediate spoils went to Big Georgie (James Ridley) in fading light. The pair travelled to Devon from North Ledbury and beat Paddycards (Sam Painting) by 1½ lengths after a good battle. **H&H**



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An absolute must as far as I'm concerned. I got my first one when I was 17 and have loved them ever since. I feel alien on anything else.

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We have a dedicated cupboard for their range of products and if it were ever taken away it would be an absolute disaster.

Our freezer

We ice the horses' legs after most strenuous exercise.

Our tack room is in the middle of the yard near the wash bay and it's great having such easy access to ice.

The yard diary

This is the heart of the yard and our bible. It contains the day's plan and running order plus invaluable records for invoicing and reminders of when horses have the physio, the farrier, vet checks and everything else.



‘I’m not sure what oil she used on the saddle but it was like sitting on a bar of soap — I must have looked like a total moron!’



Piggy French

The size of a small aircraft hanger and immaculately organised, the eventer's tack room has Sue Polley green with envy

PIGGY FRENCH is well aware that she is a lucky girl. One look around her purpose-built yard in Maidwell, Northants, the heart of which is a tack room the size of a small aircraft hanger, is enough to send the most hardened of equestrians green-eyed with envy.

“It is very big and spacious,” admits the 2011 European Championship team bronze medallist, “and we don’t want for anything. It’s very easy to keep clean, tidy and organised as we have more than enough space for everything to have its own place.”

She is also in the lucky position of having a separate rug room, complete with washer and drier.

“If it was down to me, it wouldn’t be this organised,” Piggy admits.

“I leave it to the girls to organise me and find a system that works for them. It’s more important that they know where everything is, especially once the season starts and we’re constantly packing and unpacking. I do like to keep things as simple as possible though.”

Alice Graham, Piggy’s travelling groom, is the oracle when it comes to knowing where everything is, while Sam Merry, who Piggy describes as the “mum of the yard” plays a key role in keeping records and managing orders.

Everyone has their specific role on the yard, Piggy’s being mainly riding and producing the daily running order. Regular staff catch-ups around the large table in the middle of the tack room and meticulous updating of the yard diary ensures that team French runs like clockwork. Well, almost.

“We had a work experience girl with us for a week last summer,” recalls Piggy. “On a very wet day she was left to treat some saddles. I’m not sure what oil she used but I next used the saddle to ride the three-star dressage test in equally torrential rain at Hartpury and it was an absolute disaster. It was like sitting on a bar of soap and I must have looked like a total moron! It’s now written in very large letters on the tack room whiteboard to only use the Devoucoux balm on saddles — not oil.”

While being very contented with her set-up, Piggy also recognises the value in learning from others and is happy to invest in new products and gadgets if she feels they have value.

“If I get talking to someone with a horse similar to one of mine and they recommend a piece of tack or equipment that worked well I’ll give it a go,” she says. “A groom who was with us recently suggested some laser equipment to help manage lumps and bumps and that has worked well, so I always keep my eyes and ears open.” **H&H**

Best of brown

New season, new look. We check out the most stylish and comfortable tack to keep your horse looking chic in 2016



- Equiline SJ103 dynamic saddle – made from calfskin leather with flap grip technology that provides durability and resistance to flexing.
From £2,600 www.fernsfarmpartnership.co.uk 01704 823539



- Schockemöhle Premium Amazonas bridle – softly padded and beautifully shaped. Great for those after something subtly different.
£159 (inc reins and postage) www.royalequestrian.co.uk 01234 240799



- Amerigo Vespucci grackle bridle is ideal for showjumping and eventing. The grackle noseband features a longer leather pad to prevent movement.
£224 www.zebraproducts.co.uk 01352 763350



- BR Andover bridle – a symmetric bridle featuring an anatomically formed headpiece and a beautiful, slightly curved, Swarovski crystal browband.
£125.95 www.br.nl



- Anky Classic saddle combines contact, comfort and balance, designed for those who prefer a deep seat. The three-point girth reduces pressure on the withers or the shoulders.
£1,899 www.rimarmarketing.co.uk



- John Whitaker Mexican bridle – crafted from the finest-quality Sedgwick English leather, featuring brass hardware and a sheepskin padded noseband.
£140 www.johnwhitaker.com 01706 340500



- Bespoke Swarovski crystal and pearl browbands – hand-stitched and can be matched to your brown leather. Available in straight, wave or V-shapes with loops.
From £115 www.fieldandstyle.com 07590 522008



- Childéric short stud girth – designed to eliminate the possibility of trapping vulnerable muscles. Elegantly finished, it can be adjusted in width for a bespoke fit.
£280 www.childericsaddles.co.uk



- Black Country classic show saddle – straight-cut to accentuate the horse's shoulder, and has a subtle knee roll and a low cantle.
From £900 www.blackcountry saddles.com 01543 578243



- Jayne Ross hunter and cob bridle – made from English leather, a three-quarter-inch bridle available with flat cavesson or crank nosebands.
From £110 (inc free shipping) www.totalimpactequestrian.co.uk 01258 651488



- HyClass deluxe bridle in beautifully crafted leather features a raised, padded nose- and browband. For everyday or competition use.
£79.99 (inc rubber reins) www.hy-equestrian.com 01522 529206



- Kate Negus three-point elasticated breastplate – made from English leather, it has a raised, lined wither strap and brass trigger clips.
£160 (inc delivery) www.katenegus.com 07801 150571



- Rambo Micklem deluxe competition bridle has a unique design to help relieve pressure on sensitive parts of the head. It features a wider nosepiece and a raised nose and browband. FEI approved.
£145 www.horseware.com



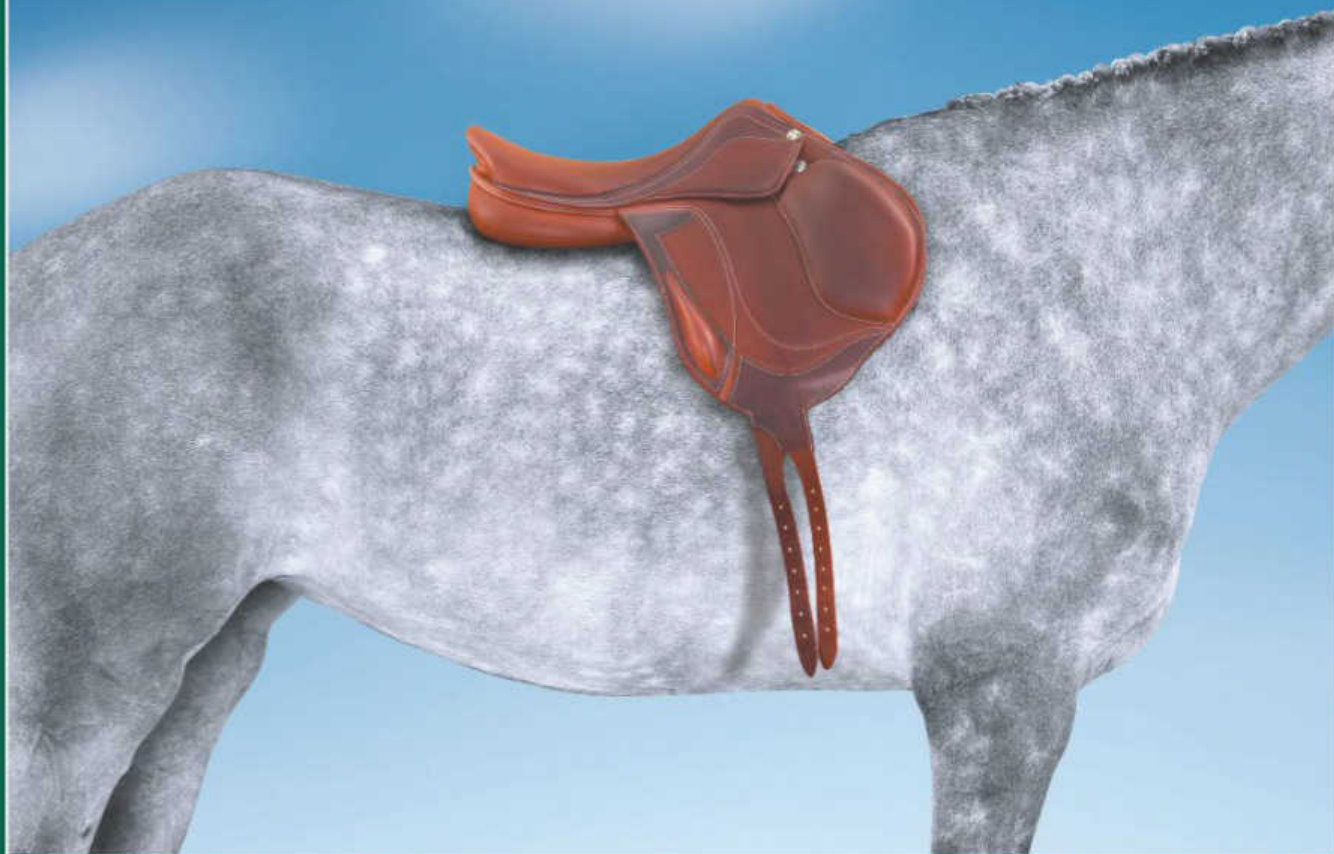
- Prestige RP jump girth – has a round shaped panel to provide greater comfort for the horse while remaining stable and eliminating nearly all side-to-side movement.
£230 (inc delivery) www.arkaequipe.com



- WOW jumping saddle – custom-made, featuring a patented laterally flexible tree, plus interchangeable flaps and panels, and air flocking.
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Description: Irish Draught Hunter for sale (registered as Irish Sport Horse). Been hunting 3 seasons with the local packs both drag & fox. Fearless across country & covers the ground second to none.

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cowleyshane@hotmail.com



Super Jumping Mare

Height: 16.2hh **Age:** 7yo **Price:** £8,000

Description: KWPN Bay Marr 2008 Stunning young horse with flashy uphill paces. Well schooled & established in basic lateral work & extensions. Very talented, careful jumper, plenty of scope, would excel in the SJ ring, been out competing at BS shows this winter being placed in both outings so far proving careful & fast, just about to start jumping at NC & I am sure will progress up the grades with ease. Elsie will give someone a lot of fun & success. Fairly low mileage as was only backed in Jan '15. Good to hack alone & in company.

07936 704 734 ro_jo_collins@hotmail.co.uk



Top Track gelding

Height: 17hh

Price: POA

Description: Stunning scopey competed easy to 1.40 will jump top tracks. 2nd grade C hickstead final 2015. Light easy snaffle ride. Can be ridden by small female rider. Schooled to perfection. easy changes. very light off the floor.

07766832061

fiona@macintyrehorses.co.uk



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Height: To make 16.2 plus

Age: Rising 3

Price: £3,500

Description: Homebred chestnut gelding. By Don Daiquiri, dam's sire Spring Elegance. Striking good looks. Good straight uphill movement. Currently long-reining. Quick learner and lovely character who deserves a knowledgeable working home to start his career. Registered BHHS.

gail@johnsonfrench.co.uk



15h 3ins - 16h 2ins

BAY MARE

Height: 16.2hh

Age: rising 7

Price: £12,500

Description: Excellent showjumper BS £141 & 91 points in few outings! Ideal amateur / top level PC/RC/ event. By I Love You, puissance also Landgraf. Easy uncomplicated always snaffle mouth. Pregnancy forces sale. **07714 267 325** **litchfieldequestrian@gmail.com**



Reg Irish Sport Horse

Height: 16.1hh

Age: Rising 4 years

Price: £2,250

Description: A really lovely grey gelding, 16.1 HH x ryalan. He is top quality, lovely quiet temperament. Quiet to handle, shows potential loose jump. Now ready to break. Potential SJ / Eventer/ Hunter Competition horse. For further details please ring. **07808475175 / 01994484294**



16hh. 11 yrs ch. G. ISH.

Height: 16hh

Age: 11 yrs

Price: £7,000

Location: Somerset

Description: Competed 90 s and 100 s BE. Works to elementary. Genuine temperament. **07878673624**



NOVICE EVENTER/ HUNTER

Height: 16.1hh **Age:** 10yo **Price:** £8,000

Description: ISH Grey Mare born 2006. Good bone and Straight mover. Won BE 90 & twice at 100. 56 FP & 10 BE points from 5 runs at novice. Easy mare that produces a well marked test, straight forwards to jump just point & kick. Also very good hunter, stands at the meet, queues well & jumps. Goes home & eats up without worrying. Has won for an amateur.

07973 321 042 gupprest@kbs.co.uk



Grey Gelding Connemara X

Height: 16.1hh **Age:** 10 yr old

Price: £7500

Location: Bath

Description: Blue is a super fun Allrounder who loves his jumping, show jumped, hunted, excellent with hounds sensible and brave jumping anything with ease. Ridden in a snaffle. Ticks all boxes to date he is pony clubbing with a 12 yr old girl and hunting with 45 yr old mother. Ridden by all the family even dad. Very smart horse indeed and difficult decision to sell but have decided to concentrate on the dressage horse. **07779639656**



Class 1 Irish Draught Hunter

Height: 16.2hh **Age:** 11yo

Price: £4,750

Description: Hunted on many occasions with the island. Done cross country and pony clubbed. Show-jumped up to 1m. Good weight carrier. Easy in every way. **0894 942 173** **denis.andrew6@gmail.com**



Stunning Piebald

Height: 100cm **Age:** Rising 8 **Price:** £7,000

Description: Benji is looking for an owner rider who wants to do well and has the time to spend building a bond with him. He will try his hardest for his special person, and forgive their mistakes! Benji is rising 8. His best features are his beautiful looks, his eyecatching movement, and his work ethic. He is talented and safe at jumping, being both bold and thoughtful. At 100cm he makes the height and distance with ease, and doesn't stop. He is happy in his skin, knows his job, easy to handle, and predictable in a crisis. comes with saddle. please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or more photos. **07825706533** **maggie_hunter@hotmail.co.uk**



Stunning Allrounder

Height: 16.1hh **Age:** 11yo **Price:** £3,500 ONO

Location: Based Faringdon, Oxon

Description: Beautiful light bay mare. Sienna has been in the same home 5yrs, fantastic fun all-round horse. Very easy & affectionate & loves & attention. She has competed in ODE's, SJ, XC, DR, fun rides & hunting & loves any job. Good to shoe, travel, clip & hacks alone or co. She is open to any trial & all instructors welcome. Open to vetting but will only be sold to a 5* knowledgeable home.

07961 939 762 stuuk1974@yahoo.co.uk



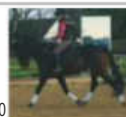


MAXI COB

Height: 16.1hh **Age:** 7yo **Price:** £2,995 ONO
Description: Lovely big cob who is very active with a great step. Would excel at Dressage. Loves jumping and would make a fab hunter. Good looking cob with no lumps or bumps. Working well in the school. Needs company to hack out. Lovely person who enjoys his work. For sale on behalf of a client. **07725 726 817**
fiona_wright99@hotmail.co.uk

Quality allrounder

Height: 16.2hh
Age: 6 year old **Price:** £6,750
Description: Handsome Irish Sports horse. Has completed in several BE90, loves his cross country, very well-mannered at hunting, competing at novice BD at present. Absolute gentlemen in every way good to hack, excellent in traffic, good to shoe, box and clip. Real favourite on the yard, only for sale due to lack of time. **07795664498**



Top potential KWPN colt

Age: born 2013
Price: £3,350
Location: Sussex
Description: Very sporty and eye-catching type, great movement with a very active hind leg. By Don Tango x Fruhling Standing at 16hh now, born 2013. For sure an ideal investment. Recently vetted, no vices. **07765 052 495** **bbwldc@gmail.com**



Fantastic Safe Hunter

Height: 16.1HH **Age:** 10yo **Price:** £4,000
Description: Safe & sensible hunter, very mannerly. Has hunted with Bedale, Zetland, Hurworth, Middleton & Ledbury. She has her limits but great over most hunting country, hunt jumps, rails & hedges etc. same home last 3 seasons. Has done pleasure rides & unaff. SJ. 5* home a must. Has 2 small sarcoids hence price. No change in last 3 years. **07921 889 237**
luptoneventing@hotmail.co.uk

Dressage / Allrounder

Price: £6,000
Location: Worcestershire
Description: Seriously Talented gelding by CASH POINT, this superb horse has 3 big elevated paces with huge potential. Jumped coloured/natural fences with lots of scope. Hacks alone or in company. No vices. **07791883234 / 07729162748**
liz.williams84@hotmail.co.uk
www.hillgrovestud.co.uk



Welsh Part Bred

Height: 15hh **Age:** 5yo
Price: £3,500
Description: Freddie has a fabulous temperament, broken professionally 2015. Showing lots of potential & has already attended his first dressage tests & jumping competitions, has good paces & jumping ability. **01691 831 957** **deliajones@btconnect.com**



Fun Hunter / Allrounder

Height: 16hh
Age: 6yo
Price: £4,250
Description: A straightforward & honest grey gelding who has started hunting with the Taunton Vale this season. He is bombproof in traffic, good to shoe & box. He hacks anywhere alone or in company. **01278 662 830** **suzyberry@hotmail.co.uk**



Children on horses

Height: 16.1hh
Price: POA
Description: Stunning bay, lord Z/Ramiro blood-lines, and an absolute dream to ride, totally uncomplicated. Huge amount of scope, no fence too big. Temperament fantastic, movement amazing, a rare opportunity to buy such a special horse. **07860151933** or **01664 424916**
nicolette@kingslandequestrian.co.uk



14h 3ins -
15h 2ins

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TOP RC BE/BD/BSJA

Price: £8,000
Description: Ultimate Top RC/Amateur Horse. UNO - lines to include USTINOV x NUMERO UNO x LANDGRAF x NIM-MERDOR, will suit top SJ / EVENT / RC / CHILD OFF PONIES horse Truly incredible talented boy. Loves to please, he has potential to burn. **07835758231** **hag234@outlook.com**



KWPN X Mare Sports Horse

Height: 16hh
Age: rising 5
Price: £5,750
Description: Great paces & presence. Professionally produced, clean slate, correct manners & upbringing. Would excel in show-jumping. Comes with full tack. **07731811182**
charlottteemily.waller@googlemail.com



Millie

Height: 15.1hh
Age: 8 year old
Price: £4,500
Description: Really fun genuine cob. Honest, forward going, very safe and willing. Easy to catch, shoe, load etc. She absolutely loves show jumping 1m 10, cross country and hunting. Comfortable ride, calm, steady. **07770226165**
paul.davies@siliconhighway.co.uk

Fantastic Event Project

Height: 16hh **Age:** 8yo
Price: £1,700
Description: Bay mare, great temperament, 3 correct paces, very easy on the flat and love jumping, hacks alone or in company. Clip, box, shoe, manners to die for. She would make a fantastic event horse. **447748214497**
pace.eventing@hotmail.co.uk



RID gelding

Height: 16hh
Age: 4 yrs old
Price: £4,000
Description: Show quality by Clew Bay Bouncer. Registered Irish Draught gelding. Sire: Clew Bay Bouncer Dam's Sire: Crannagh Hero Exceptionally easy gelding, rides in a snaffle bit. Has hunted with the Galway blazers. **+353872489408**
e.hynes2@yahoo.ie



Novice Eventer

Height: 15.2hh **Age:** rising 9 **Price:** POA
Description: ISH, gelding, 20 BE points, 115 foundation points. Wins & placings at BE100 and novice level. Consistent novice record, scope to go up the grades. Reliable in the dressage, good mover, easy to ride to his fences SJ, bold & straightforward XC. Loves his XC but not strong, always goes in snaffle. Super type & conformation. Manners to burn. A pleasure to do in every way. **07743 986 615** **kathy@idealsportshorses.com**

TOP BD/BE/BSJA Young Horse

Price: £10,000
Description: Grand Amour (Hugo) - Top blood lines - ANDIAMO x PANDINUS x BONDINUS x PILOT - This horse was bred from the best, he has the best movement, jump, temperament, he is just pure quality and is pure class! **07835758231**
hag234@outlook.com



Very talented 16.1hh

Age: 10yo
Price: £5,000
Description: Bay ISH gelding. Buzz is an extremely talented horse who has excelled in all disciplines. He is now ready to go on & affiliate & compete in BD/ & or BE. Competing including national level for RC dressage. **07984 330 378** **jennarking@outlook.com**



A True Gentleman

Height: 15.2hh **Age:** 8yo **Price:** £4,750
Description: Sad sale due to owner giving up horses. Competed regularly at 90cm 2014/2015 with previous owner. Consistently placed. Lovely paces and clean jumper. Has schooled over BE100 & Novice fences with ease. Real event potential. Light work since August due to current owner commitments. Not a novice ride. Experienced, knowledgeable 5* home looked for. Comes with bridle & full wardrobe. **07920 106 180** **hannahstewartx@hotmail.com**

Pretty bay mare**Height:** 15.2hh**Age:** 7 years**Price:** £4000

Description: Master in cross TB, for competitors home, PC/RC activities. 100% safe on the roads, occasionally spooky, suit mother/daughter share/teenager. Would also be fast against the clock for show jumping. Have done local shows, hacks alone or in company. Clipped and fairly fit, ready to go. Would also hunt as goes in front or behind. Price for quick sale, including tack and rugs. Would consider LWVTB to right family.

07590909552**A Beautiful Appaloosa Mare****Height:** 15hh**Age:** 5yo**Price:** £5,000**Description:**

Backed, long reined and lunged. Amazing jumper. We love her dearly but sad sale due to illness.

07771 917 602**susiesoo@mail.com****DAPPLE GREY****Height:** 15.1hh**Age:** 5yo**Price:** £3,750**Description:**

Absolute stunning horse with temperament to match. A pleasure to have around. No vices. Schooling well in walk trot & canter. Scopey jump. Good to hack. No quirks. Open to vet & trainer.

07725 472 201 leanned2508@hotmail.com**100% parents dream pony****Height:** 13.2hh**Age:** 8 years**Price:** £3,000

Description: Grey mare. Completely safe jumps a course of jumps never getting strong or fizzy has done xc never getting fast or silly. Hacks alone and in company would make the most perfect PC pony or first pony. **07786962739**

leanneeb@hotmail.com**SUPER CHESTNUT ROAN MARE****Height:** 12hh **Age:** 10yo **Price:** Open to offers

Description: Welsh Sec A jumping pony. Daisy is a very scopey but sharp little pony. 100% catch, clip, box, shoe, traffic & to handle but requires capable little jockey as quite sharp. She is capable of jumping 128 tracks with the right rider. Under-utilized in current PC home & seeking bold & capable rider to continue her success. No novices please.

07899 925 348 / 01622 884 402**nicolaj.bentley@btinternet.com****Irish Allrounder****Height:** 15.1hh **Age:** 6yo**Price:** POA**Location:** Midlands (Banbury)

Description: Gelding, a super little horse who has had a good start to his education, hunted, x,c, sj's, hacked in the heaviest of traffic daily, clip, box, shoe etc. Genuine, kind, laid back & uncomplicated with no nasty tricks. Price will increase the more he does. Please no texts, emails, loans or timewasters. **07818 676272**

**Talented ISH All Rounder****Height:** 15.1hh**Age:** 7yo**Price:** £4,950**Description:** This

well bred little mare works well on the flat, has a careful jump, enjoys a days Autumn hunting, has attended camp & is great to hack, loads like a dream & up to date with jabs, teeth etc.

07921 631 921 jane.tesseyman@live.co.uk**12.2HH MARE****Age:** 8yo **Price:** £4,000 **Location:** Newbury, Berkshire

Description: This pony is being re-advertised due to time wasters. She is 8yrs old, bay and has been to Hoys twice, RIHS once and numerous other shows. She has taken a nervous jockey into the show ring and given her confidence for the bigger ponies as she has sadly outgrown this sweet pony.

07748 107 151 hjhelenhorton@aol.com**Stunning Pocket Rocket****Height:** 15.1hh **Age:** rising 7**Price:** £3,000

Description: Byefields Molly Malone reg Welsh Sec D mare. Good to hack, on roads & with traffic. Easy to handle in & out of the stable, exc to clip, has had a full clip this winter. Good with farrier, barefoot as she tends to slide with shoes, hooves in exc condition & will pick up all four. Never had sweet itch or laminitis.

07943 228 551 kateharris1691@gmail.com**Stunning Project Horse****Height:** 15.2hh **Age:** 4 year old**Price:** £1,000

Description: Kenny is a chestnut gelding. Passport states Unknown breed. He was backed in May 2015 at Phoenix Equestrian. With an experienced rider he works well in the school and is currently working on walk, trot, canter. **07950 305955**

janesheridan14@gmail.com**Black Gelding****Height:** 14.2hh**Age:** 12yo**Price:** £3,850

Description: Black Gelding schoolmaster 2nd pony and would suit a mother/child set-up as he is strong-able to carry small adults. He has a very laid back attitude towards his work, he moves straight & has great conformation, a little horse with lots of presence-could be county standard WHP. No Vices! He has a lovely snaffle mouth-showing a great technique over both coloured & rustic fences.

01580 240120 suseers@gmail.com**Top Endurance Prospect****Age:** 5.5 year old**Price:** £2,500

Description: Liver Chestnut, Homebred then with me since foal, easy break, bombproof on roads in traffic, lively in company and for fast work, just learning to jumps, schools in beautiful outline moves lovely. **boukhy@hotmail.com**

**Talented Pretty Youngster****Height:** 15.1hh **Age:** 4yo**Price:** £2,500**Description:** Grey ISH

mare. King of diamonds lines, all breeding recorded & DNA test. Talented, scope to burn. Has been sat on & very well behaved. Ready to break & start career. Suit competent teen SJ. **07824 161 486 francesca.allen93@yahoo.co.uk**

**BYRDS Potential****Height:** 142.2cms**Age:** 12yo**Price:** £3,000

Description: Handsome, dark bay, British riding pony by Barkway Kouras. Super paces working with current rider at Prelim but has previously done novice. Would excel in showground. Good to do in all ways, fantastic manners.

07834 828 303 jayne@leedham-ifa.co.uk**Ideal Pony Club Pony****Height:** 14.1hh**Age:** 11yo**Price:** £2,500**Description:**

Pepsi is a lovely chestnut X cob mare. Has competed at PC Champs. Competes at SJ, Tetrathlon, XC & Hunts. She has been a fabulous PC pony.

07973 222 041 lisalessels@hotmail.co.uk**Sensible talented****Height:** 128cm **Price:** POA

Description: Versatile pony. Has competed 110s, easy snaffle ride, very well schooled and in top form. Can be ridden by beginner, and has talent for capable competitive rider. Has LHC. Kind confident pony who is ideal for children to work with, excellent to catch, box, shoe, clip, no vices. not spooky or fizzy, loves beach rides hacks.

07766832061 fiona@macintyrehorses.co.uk**Genuine Allrounder****Height:** 14.2hh**Age:** 5yo**Price:** £1,650**Description:**

Very easy to do mare she would be an ideal mother / daughter share. Hunted this season not silly or strong. Schools well. Has a bold & brave jump. No vices. Open to any vetting.

07791 521 559 lauratedds@hotmail.co.uk**GREY GELDING****Height:** 13.2hh**Age:** 5yo**Price:** £2,500

Description: Has been brought on slowly doing XC, dressage & 80/90cm SJ bold & willing with great technique. Fab to hack across fields & busy traffic, snaffle mouth lovely temp, 100% shoe, box, catch, clip.

07714 267 325**litchfieldquestrian@gmail.com**

14h 2ins & under

HORSES FOR SALE

TEENS / LADIES DREAM HUNTER

Height: 14.2hh Age: 6

Price: £4,500

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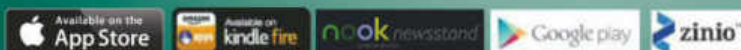


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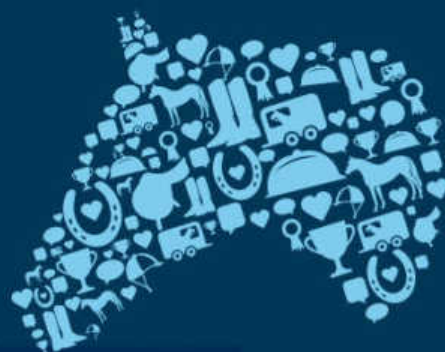
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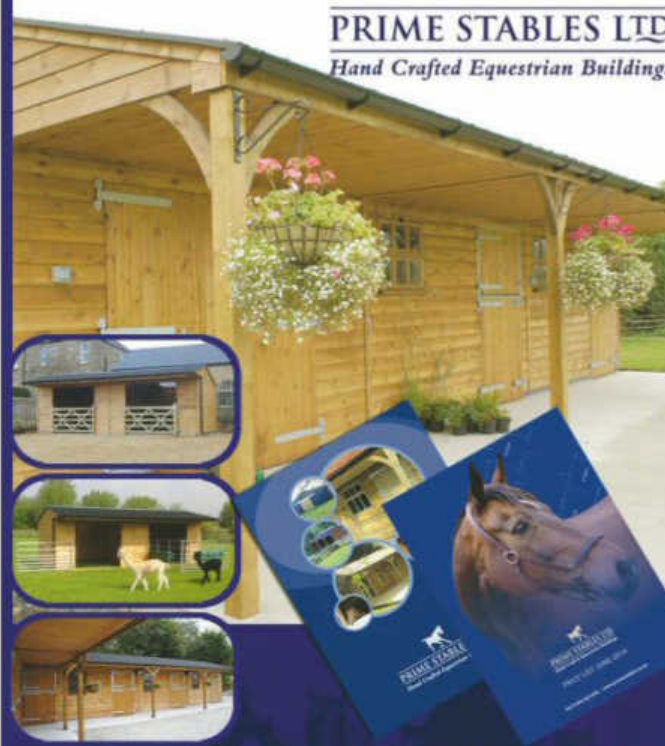


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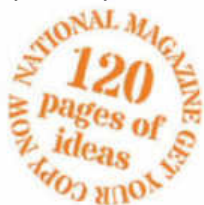
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The horse that made me

Showing producer Lynn Russell on the show cob Polaris, whose initial hairy looks proved to be deceptive

I was having lunch with a friend who said she had a pure Irish draught that she was using as a teaser and asked if I was interested. Polaris looked like a little hairy native pony, but when I saw him walk up the drive I thought, "Wow, I have to have this horse." It took me a wee while to persuade my friend to sell him to me at the right price, but it took me five times longer to get the bloody thing on the lorry!

He was an entire so I took him to my vet to be castrated. He injected all round his testicles then cut them off, slung them on the ground, and I took the horse home. There were builders on the yard who had a little Jack Russell. It ate Polaris' bollocks and slept for 24 hours. The poor terrier got all the dope.

I took Polaris to Windsor when Lady Zinnia Judd was judging. She was someone whose opinion I'd always valued and he won his class there as a four-year-old. He carried on winning and I had tremendous fun with him.

He was a very kind horse. Once, I was kicked in the back, which ruptured my spleen and broke all the ribs on my left-hand side. That was five weeks before Horse of the Year Show. A friend drove me there, somebody else took Polaris up, somebody rode him in, then I rode him in the class, got off and didn't ride again for three months. That was his temperament. He never had me off, never bucked, never did anything nasty.

He stayed with me until he was 11 and now he's retired, living with a friend of mine. He's in his 20s now and she will keep him until the day he dies. **H&H**

● **NEXT WEEK:** side-saddle rider
Lucy Holland

'I saw him walk up the drive and thought, "Wow, I have to have him"'



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